



Longboat Key News

InsideLook

Where should they all park?
...page 8

Bird Key sale leads market
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From Louisiana to Longboat
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Is this really your beach?
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Revised St. Regis Garage heading back to Commission after developer reacts to vote

Unicorp President Chuck Whittall said after listening to the reaction of the Commission and the community, he wants to scale the height back and emphasize how essential the garage is for the entirety of the development. Commission could take many paths.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Unicorp President Chuck Whittall told Longboat Key News Friday that the proposal to build a parking garage at the St. Regis will be amended to lower the garage by one-story before the matter comes back to the Town Commission for a vote in June.

Unicorp's request for a multi-story garage was turned down at a June 5 hearing with a 6-0 vote

NewsAnalysis

by the Longboat Key Commission instructing the Town Attorney to draft an Order of Denial.

The Commission, faced with dozens of residents voicing opposition, cited concerns including:

- Setting a precedent in building parking garages for commercial operations close to Gulf of Mexico Drive.
- Inadequate landscape screening and lack of spacing between build-

ings on the site.

- The previously approved plan meets the parking requirements and the garage would actually give the developer 177 parking spaces over what is required by Town Code.

But Whittall said after listening to the reaction of the Commission and the community he wants to scale the height back and emphasize how essential the garage is for the entirety of the development.

See Garage, page 2

Backers pull plug on Winter Festival at St. Armands

"It seems that our efforts to continue down the path of bringing back the Winter Spectacular for this coming holiday season will only be divisive..."

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Citing relentless opposition from some organizations and members of the public, Ride Entertainment has officially pulled the plug on its Winter Festival on St. Armands Circle.

Jeff and David Koffman of Ride Entertainment wrote the Sarasota City Commission the following on June 7:

"We are disappointed that as a result of the loud voices of a minority of citizens, the potential and purpose of Winter Spectacular of 2023 will not be realized and is still mired in contentiousness. It seems that our efforts to continue down the path of bringing back the Winter Spectacular for this coming holiday season will only be divisive by these same loud minority voices and thus negate the true meaning of the holiday season and the purpose of the festival," said the Koffmans.

Ride Entertainment worked in tandem with Shore Restaurant owner Tom Leonard in bringing the Christmas festival to the Circle last Winter. The controversy and criticism centered on the following:

- The St. Armands Circle President Chris Goglia argued that the City did not have the right to lease the very location where the event was being held. Additionally his group was opposed to the increases in traffic and lack of coordination with other events.
- St. Armands Merchants Association President opposed the method and manner in which the event unfolded and occurred citing a lack of coordination with the Merchants Association and previous obligations including the Porsches on the Circle event.

The City still plans to install the Christmas tree it spent more than \$250,000 to purchase last Winter.

Bird Key home sells for \$9.75 million

One of the area's most expensive residences, owned by award-winning author Julie McGue, just sold on Bird Key for \$9.75 million



One of the area's most expensive residences, owned by an award-winning author, just sold on Bird Key, Bruce Myer, with Coldwell Banker Realty, represented the sale of 622 S. Owl Drive for \$9,750,000.

This residence brings 4 bedrooms, two offices, 4.5 baths, and 5,635+/- sq. ft. of living area on the bay with wide open views spanning Big Pass, Lido and Siesta keys, and beyond to the Gulf of Mexico.

Myer's history with this property spans decades. In 2002, Myer represented the buyers of 622 S. Owl Drive, and the neighboring lot, 626 S. Owl Drive. In 2021, 622 S. Owl Drive was offered for sale and Myer represented the purchase by the Stephen and Julie McGue. They performed numerous updates throughout the residence.

Julie McGue is the award-winning author of the book "Twice a Daughter". Her poignant memoir about searching for her birth family due to a health related manner, struck a chord with adopted persons who yearn for answers and connection with biological relatives. She has written two additional books, one publishing in November, 2023, entitled "Belonging Matters", and is working on an additional book to publish in 2024.

"This interweaving of transactions over the course of decades is what makes my profession so enjoyable and rewarding. It's about building enduring relationships with not only clients, but colleagues, as well. This residence enjoyed a lot of interest, confirming that premier waterfront properties are always in demand. There are only so many waterfront properties on Bird Key that enjoy this positioning," said Myer.

THE DIPINTO COLLECTION



LIDO KEY • 159 TAFT DR., #206 **\$2,699,000**
Just listed- This coastal contemporary home offers attractive one-level-living, an abundance of natural sunlight and boasts a full array of developer upgrades. Desirable end unit with 3 BR/ 3 BA. Only 18 unique owners, perfectly situated between Sarasota Bay and the Gulf of Mexico.



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MOVE IN FALL 2023
LIDO SHORES • 1212 CENTER PLACE **\$5,699,000**
Currently under construction. Spectacular location, steps to private beach and St. Armands Circle. This desirable, custom residence offers an open, bright, and airy floor plan with 5BR/5BA. Impressive 23-ft. ceiling in great room. Fantastic outdoor area w/custom pool, spa, kitchen and lanai. The residence boasts 4,750 sq. ft. of air-conditioned space with an additional 200 square feet of walkable terrace area including a breathtaking SKY-TERRACE offering 360 degree panoramic views of Sarasota's magnificent city and water views.



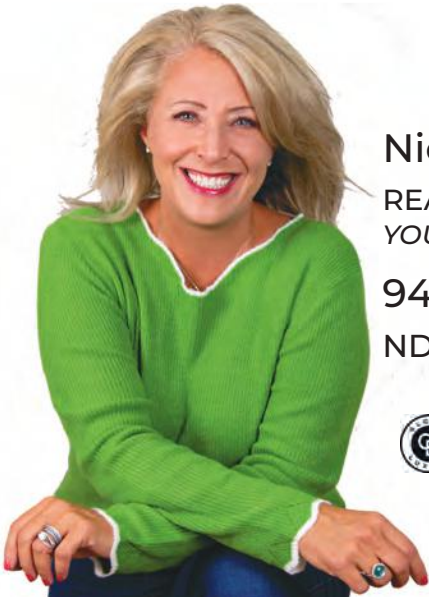
GULF FRONT NEW CONSTRUCTION
LONGBOAT KEY • 6489 GULFSIDE DRIVE **\$16,900,000**
Fabulous Gulf front lot offering nearly 100 ft. of sandy beach, this gorgeous DSDG Architect designed home is a rare find. Boasting almost 6,000 AC/SF, this spectacular home is custom built with the finest details throughout. Architect designed landscaped exterior and 4-car garage.



NOW PENDING SALE
BIRD KEY • 217 BIRD KEY DRIVE **\$1,999,000**
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NOW PENDING SALE
SIESTA KEY • HIGEL AVE. **\$16,995,000**
Currently under construction and scheduled to be ready Fall 2023, this breathtaking 8,964 AC/SF residence is one of a kind, designed by DSDG. Gulf front property on one acre and offers a 2,000 SF roof terrace. Separate guest house and 8-car garage. No expense spared on this remarkable home.



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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.

Thank You For Your Competent Service.

To: Longboat Key Commission
Commissioner, many in the audience yesterday, regarding the St. Regis garage expansion application, applaud your position. Especially for standing up to the “badgering” by Unicorp Counsel about how residents who have been outspoken about our garage expansion concerns “are not experts” so basically pay little or no attention to their letters and testimony.
How demeaning and disrespectful to full time residents who, as you articulately said, are experts about what we want our LBK home island to be and not be.
The Longboat Key legacy of common sense management of development and growth lives on thanks to you and our able Commission.
Well done and thank you!
Bob and Shannon Gault
Longboat Key

Please share with all Commissioners

To: Longboat Key Commission
Thank you Mayor and all Commissioners for your professionalism.
I was very impressed with the process on Monday. The Longboat Key Commission and its leadership appeared to extend every opportunity to citizens, applicants and the lawyers involved, for everyone to be heard and not rushed in their presentations or responses. Everyone, who wanted to be heard, was given an opportunity to participate.
The Commissioners were prepared and asked very pertinent questions that needed to be answered. It was very clear they had studied the documents and knew the issues. There were many pertinent points but one comment stood out. Commissioner Bishop asked very politely,

“Where is the sidewalk?” when a drawing demonstrating the landscaping, that would conceal the building, was shown by staff. The sidewalk had been omitted from the drawing thereby demonstrating room for much more landscape materials than could be used on the site.
The Commission made the best decision. No, this wasn’t according to code. If it was, more departures would not have been needed. And no, it wasn’t a minor detail. The applicant did not present competent substantial evidence of facts to show the need for the deviation.
The plans, previously approved in 2 separate filings and multiple hearings, were the result of requests and compromise. You cannot continue to compromise what is already a compromise or the results will be compromised!
No one, including the developer or residents, should want a building, the size of an Amazon warehouse, the length of a football field, sitting so very close to Gulf of Mexico Drive. There was no room for adequate landscape to conceal the parking garage building if it had been approved. We are all excited to see a beautiful resort, please, do not disappoint us by making a first impression of a massive parking structure as we arrive at the resort.
The St Regis development will be a source of pride for the developer, owners and all citizens when the landscaping is added to make it look like the paradise oasis it is. Until then, it is a massive construction project with concrete buildings rising out of the sand promising hope for better things to come.
Thank you so much for your dedication and preparation on the issues and thank you for all the time you spend to make our island an even better place to live.
Lynn Larson
Longboat Key

LBK Chamber Freedom Fest

To: Longboat Key Commission
Please let me know if you will be at the Freedom Fest on July 4th and in the parade. Many thanks.
Gail Loefgren
President/CEO
Longboat Key Chamber of Commerce

LBK Chamber Freedom Fest

To: Longboat Key Chamber President Gail Loefgren
I sent a yes earlier but got another email with same question. Still yes.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner, Longboat Key

See Letters, page 6

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DIRECT BAY FRONT

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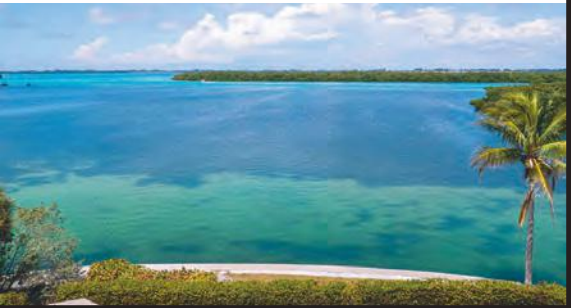
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5910 GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

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793 JUNGLE QUEEN WAY | LONGBOAT KEY

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1211 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #601 | LONGBOAT KEY

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NOW PENDING!

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830 TARAWITT DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

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STEVE WALTER

941.809.0907

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Front View

EditorLetters



Letters, from page 4

Storage unit on Access Path - Emerald Harbor

To: Marge Langteau

I read the explanation from P&Z regarding your request for a storage structure on the Emerald Harbor beach access path. It made me think of the structures that are located on the beach side of GMD across from Twin Shores and Gulf Shores. These look like storage huts/shelters, and not primary structures. It may be helpful to explore how those permits were obtained and see if there are any similarities to what you are requesting.

Debra Williams
Commissioner
Longboat Key

Storage unit on Access Path - Emerald Harbor

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Debra Williams

I just saw this email. Thank you! I am not getting through to the Turtle Watch folks for their support. I have messages out to Cyndi Seaman and Tim Thurman. I have plans to visit Bay Isles private access and Lido Beach private beach access this morning. I will go to the beach side across from Twin Shores and Gulf Shores on the list. I will take pictures and after we have a case, set something up with Alan Parsons.

Maybe we could meet after I have some evidence to show for more advice. Thank you for your help!

Marge Langteau
Longboat Key

Storage unit on Access Path - Emerald Harbor

To: Marge Langteau

You're welcome. I would be happy to speak with you or meet in person if you'd like. Either way please keep me in the loop.

Debra Williams
Commissioner
Longboat Key

570 Emerald Harbor

To: Marge Langteau

After several conversations with my Director and Planning and Zoning Manager we have all concurred that a storage shed would not be allowed on the pathway to the beach for the Emerald Harbor Community. I have taken pictures and heard your ideas of the benefits of such structure. Although you have some valid points concerning the safety of the sea turtles, the ultimate decision must be made with what is currently on the books for Planning and Zoning. That parcel is zoned as a non-conforming lot. As defined as too small to build a principal use structure. A storage shed is not a principal use structure. It is an accessory use structure which are only allowed if the lot had a principal use structure.

It was a pleasure to meet with you and work together. This is a beautiful island and a great place to live. The ordinances and codes that are in place are the primary reason for that. I look forward to working with you in the future to keep this island great!

Bryan Wisnom
Code Enforcement Officer Planning, Zoning & Building Dept.
Town of Longboat Key

Winter Spectacular on St Armands Circle

To: Sarasota City Commission

Our first priority when proposing the Winter Spectacular '22 was to create a memorable, unifying and joyous experience for all of Sarasota during the holiday season. We had over

See Letters, page 8



I can get over the bridge quicker on my electric bike than I can by car!

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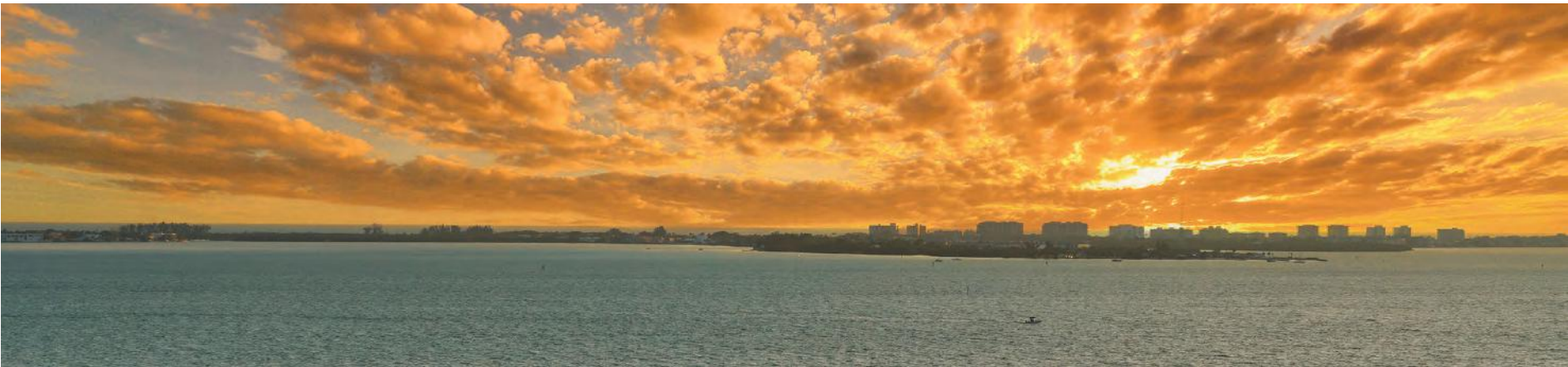
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EditorLetters

Letters, from page 8

20,000 happy residents and visitors that greatly enjoyed the festival.

We are disappointed that, as a result of the loud voices of a minority of citizens, the potential and purpose of Winter Spectacular 2023 will not be realized and is still mired in contentiousness. It seems that our efforts to continue down the path of bringing back the Winter Spectacular for this coming holiday season will only be divisive by these same loud minority voices and thus negate the true meaning of the holiday season and the purpose of the festival.

With deep disappointment, we are letting you know that we will not be pursuing approval of Winter Spectacular on St Armands Circle 2023. We thank you for creating the opportunity that allowed us to bring the Winter Spectacular experience to all residents.

Jeff Koffman and David Koffman
Ride Entertainment of Sarasota

North End Beach Parking

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Thank you for your gracious offer to meet with me.

I am here on the Key through Monday, June 12 and then return to Colorado for the summer months. Is it possible to meet this week?

Matt Schroeder
Longboat Key

North End Beach Parking

To: Matt Schroeder

To be honest, until your recent notes I was not aware of the extent of the beach parking issue at the north end that you describe. As I'm sure you know, we spent years addressing the parking concerns of Village residents caused largely by the restaurants, but I suspect their Resident Only parking program has diverted some beach visitors from

Broadway to the west side of GMD. I'm happy to sit down and discuss this with you at your convenience.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Longboat Key

North End Beach Parking

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

I applaud the Commission's 6-0 decision to deny the construction of a parking garage at the St Regis.

Many of the arguments made against the garage are applicable to the North end beach parking on North Shore Road, Firehouse Road, Broadway Street, and the de facto beach parking lots at the old bank building and Whitney Beach Plaza. The issues are widely known and have been around for some time. Everyone knows about it but nothing gets done to fix it.

You are quoted in the newspaper as saying "the garage has generated substantial resistance from all corners of the community." Having lived at Sea Pines for 20 years, I can unequivocally state the current beach parking situation on the North end is opposed by all corners of the community; to wit: Sea Pines, Longbeach, 360 North and Firehouse.

Can we receive the same level of concern and attention the garage received and have the Commission take a hard look at North end beach parking and fix it? If not, why not?

Matt Schroeder
Longboat Key

Keep Longboat Key a paradise

To: Longboat Key Commission

I second Mr. Gault's sentiments. My wife and I appreciate your support in keeping Longboat Key the Paradise we moved to 8 years ago.

William Stein III
Longboat Key

St. Regis parking garage

To: Longboat Key Commission

Cindy and I thank you for your unanimous decision to protect our community!

As I noted in yesterday's meeting, "Never" and "Forever" took on new meaning for all of us.

The developer was not told by you that "Never" can he bring forth a more respectful, reasoned, and defensible parking solution. Indeed, thanks to your decision he will open on-time next year, and, after several years of real-world experience, can come back with a smarter solution for all; one based on hard facts and data, yet respectful of the Community.

But, had he found some way to succeed in building the monstrosity of a garage on Gulf of Mexico Drive, all of us would have had to suffer it "Forever".

I was particularly struck with the fact that so many of you took the time to walk the project and personally witness what the garage would have done to the island. Thank you for putting forth the extra effort. No one told you to do it; you just did it.

Yesterday, during open comments, I chose not to share one personal story with you. The meeting had gone on long enough.

Six years ago, Cindy and I initially bought a home on St. Armand's, fully expecting that to be our last home. Our hopes were dashed by the brutal onslaught of "Hotel Homes" rapidly built by sketchy developers on the island. Despite our neighborhood's efforts - and legal expenses - the City of Sarasota ignored us until it was too late, and the many giant high-occupancy buildings ruined the unique character of St. Armands' and Lido Key's peaceful lifestyles.

So, we packed up, sold our home, and moved to LBK specifically because the Township enjoys the unique reputation of protecting the priceless beauty of the island.

So, thank you for making the right decision. Thank you for putting forth the extra effort. Thank you for staying true to the spirit of, "...keeping LBK, LBK". Your tenacity and perseverance will pay dividends for all residents for years to come!

Jeff and Cindy Ray
Longboat Key

Thank You For Your Competent Service.

To: Longboat Key Commission

Commissioner, many in the audience yesterday, regarding the St. Regis garage expansion application, applaud your position. Especially for standing up to the "badgering" by Unicorp Counsel about how residents who have been outspoken about our garage expansion concerns "are not experts" so basically pay little or no attention to their letters and testimony.

How demeaning and disrespectful to full time residents who, as you articulately said, are experts about what we want our LBK home island to be and not be.

The LBK legacy of common sense management of development and growth lives on thanks to you and our able Commission. Well done and thank you!

Bob and Shannon Gault
Longboat Key

See Letters, page 11

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Address	Sq. Ft.	List Price	Bed/Bath/Half Bath			Days On Market	Sale Price
415 L AMBIANCE DR Unit#C504	2,820	\$3,499,000	2	3	1	64	\$3,430,000
545 SANCTUARY DR Unit#A402	2,580	\$3,100,000	3	3	1	4	\$3,060,000
775 LONGBOAT CLUB RD Unit#906	1,524	\$1,775,000	2	2	1	28	\$1,675,000
1485 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#303	1,569	\$1,348,000	2	2	1	85	\$1,300,000
530 DE NARVAEZ DR	1,944	\$1,280,000	3	2	1	142	\$1,050,000
6700 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#134	990	\$599,000	1	1	1	41	\$585,000
3320 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#208-C	1,154	\$549,900	2	2	1	97	\$490,000
410 MEADOW LARK DR	3,257	\$3,795,000	4	2	1	4	\$3,450,000
114 N WARBLER LN	1,936	\$3,100,000	3	2	0	0	\$3,100,000



410 MEADOW LARK DR



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ACTIVE LISTING \$2,215,000



WATER CLUB
1241 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #808
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LAKEWOOD RANCH
5527 PALMER CIRCLE, #206
ACTIVE LISTING \$485,000



BIRD KEY
410 MEADOWLARK DRIVE
PENDING \$3,795,000



BIRD KEY
526 BIRD KEY DRIVE
SOLD \$2,225,000



BIRD KEY
449 E ROYAL FLAMINGO DRIVE
SOLD \$5,600,000

OnPatrol

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

June 2 Alarm

5:35 p.m.
Officer Nazareno was dispatched to the 6100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a burglary alarm call that originated from the front door. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno made contact with the homeowner who provided him with his driver's license as proof that he resides at the address. Case clear.

June 3 Noise

1:40 a.m.
Officer Miklos responded to Marbury Lane for a noise complaint. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos made contact with the homeowner and advised him that he received a noise complaint past the ordinance time. The homeowner advised he understood and turned the music down without incident. Case clear.

Citizen assist

2:00 p.m.
Officer Smith was dispatched to Seabreeze Avenue for a report of a vehicle parked in the caller's driveway. Upon arrival, Officer Smith met with the homeowner and he stated unknown persons had parked in his driveway. It was later determined the vehicle owner was from the neighboring complex and they had parked their vehicle there due to the parking lot being resurfaced. The caller allowed the vehicle to remain parked on the property. Case clear.

Suspicious person

2:20 p.m.
Officer Nazareno was dispatched to the 1000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a suspicious person call regarding a group of people at the beach using the private beach chairs. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno observed a group of beachgoers leaving the public beach area and spoke with the man who is currently staying at Country Club Shores. The man was advised that the beach chairs were private property of the condominium. Case clear.

Suspicious vehicle

11:25 p.m.
Officer Martinson was conducting a business check at the marina when he observed a suspicious vehicle in the parking lot. The vehicle was a black Toyota with the driver side door open and a man sitting in the front driver's seat after hours. Officer Martinson approached the man and a man sitting in the front driver's seat after hours. Officer Martinson approached the man and asked what he was doing parked in the lot. The man stated his vehicle broke down and his cousin was on his way to assist him. A short time later his cousin arrived and assisted them in calling for a tow. Case clear.

June 4 Animal

9:11 a.m.
Officer Smith was dispatched to the Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of a deceased raccoon



in the roadway at the entrance to the condominium. Officer Smith sent a message to Public Works to have it removed, case clear.

Citizen assist

11:34 a.m.
Officer Nazareno responded to Longboat Drive South for a citizen assist call regarding possible flooding on the street in front of the location. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno observed water pooling in the street coming from the drains and canal. Officer Nazareno made contact with the caller and advised that the minor flooding was caused by the high tide. Case clear.

June 5 Suspicious person

8:47 a.m.
Officer Montfort responded to the 2100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a missing vessel. At the same time, Officer Montfort was dispatched to a suspicious person matching the man's description. The man who stated he had misplaced his 28 foot yellow sailboat and spent the night in St. Armands Circle. The man inquired to any reports of adrift vessels and recalls mooring his vessel near the Longboat Pass Bridge or Cortez Bridge. The man provided his contact information and was sent on his way without incident. Officer Connors while on marine patrol, located the man's missing sailboat, anchored, approximately 100 yards south of the John Ringling Bridge, within close proximity to Bird Key. A check of the vessel for the man was negative and a small inflatable dinghy was located on the shore nearby. Officer Montfort cancelled the marine BOLO for the surrounding agencies that was put out earlier in the day, that the sailboat had been located and to contact Longboat Key Marine patrol with any further information. On June 6, Officer Connors received a phone call from Coast Guard Station Cortez, advising that the owner of said sailboat was currently at the Coast Guard Station looking for information on his sailboat whereabouts. Officer Connors advised the Coast Guard that as of last evening, the sailboat was anchored south of the John Ringling Bridge. Case clear.

Boating

4:50 p.m.
Officer Connors while on marine patrol in the area of Jewfish Key, observed a personal watercraft operating on plane, with an excessive wake, in a posted "Slow Speed, Minimum Wake" zone. The operator was operating carelessly as he was doing 'donut' maneuvers. Officer Connors conducted a vessel stop and advised the operator of the violation. The operator also had no registration numbers nor sticker on the watercraft. Officer Connors issued a citation for the violation. Case clear.

June 6 Suspicious person

9:15 p.m.
Officer Butler was dispatched to the beach for a report of lights on at the beach, and there may potentially be a party. Upon arrival, Officer Butler did a canvass of the beach and found a family post sunset with a lit tiki torch and a radio playing. Officer Butler verbally warned them of open flame and the noise ordinance as well as sea turtle precautions. Case clear.

June 7 Citizen assist

2:14 p.m.
Officer Smith responded to the 200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to the guard house and someone hitting the pole gate. Upon arrival, Officer Smith met with the caller and he indicated that a vehicle had entered through the exit gate causing damage to the pole gate. Officer Smith made contact with the owner of the vehicle and he stated that he did hit the pole gate because the entry was not working properly so he forced his way through the gate. The owner of the vehicle indicated that he was having breakfast with the president of the homeowner association and would take care of the damage. Officer Smith made contact with the Vice President of the homeowner association and he indicated they would handle the situation civilly, and did not require further law enforcement involvement. Case clear.

June 8 Dog on the beach

6:25 p.m.
Officer Martinson was dispatched to the 2800 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of a dog on the beach. The complainant stated that a man and woman were under a blue umbrella and have a small dog on the beach. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson located the couple with a small dog under a blue umbrella. The man stated the dog was a service dog and provided the officer with the service dog's tag documentation. Case clear.

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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 9 St Regis Parking Garage

To: Longboat Key Commission

It is my understanding you will start your hearings next week on the request by Chuck Whittall , as the owner of the St Regis development , on a number of amendments to their development plan .

My comments , while brief , are rendered in my position as President of the Aquarius Club, the condominium directly to the north of the St Regis development.

First I state that we , while obviously having gone through significant disruption while their build has and continues to proceed , have found them to be extremely considerate of us as neighbors.

It is our belief that the St Regis itself will be a superb addition to the Key .

Our one concern has been the potential limited parking capacity and its direct negative impact on us as the closest building . All 58 of our owners favor the addition of the two story parking garage . It is realized this new facility will be positioned on the exact footprint of the prior contemplated ground parking in the current plan.

We believe the additional 50 plus parking spots will reduce this concern. The elevation will be virtually not of concern in relation to the other buildings. Plantings will cover most of that issue.

W F Morneau
Longboat Key

Bunnies

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Ken Schneier

I have seen the letters about Longboat’s growing rabbit population in the paper. I am disturbed that we would consider eliminating our island’s bunnies because they eat plants. As worldwide wildlife populations plummet (including some Florida rabbit populations), we must stop persecuting other species.

I haven’t noted an increase in rabbits over the past few years and am not aware of any empirical evidence that Longboat’s bunny population is increasing. As Mr. Chinnis noted, they were here long before we arrived and destroyed much of their habitat. I also agree with Mr. Tipton that the Town of Longboat Key has many important issues to work on, and fighting with bunnies isn’t one of them.

As a resident of LBK, I would be delighted if our bunny population rebounded. We should treasure our island’s wildlife and celebrate our wild neighbors. Rabbit resistant plants are an efficient, humane, and cost-effective way to live in harmony with our bunnies. I myself am only too happy to endure nibbled flowers to support our native creatures and a vibrant, wildlife-friendly community!

Brice Claypoole
Longboat Key

Bunnies

To: Brice Claypoole

Thanks for your letter. I am actually a bunny fan and was happy to see them for the first time in our neighborhood a few years ago. My concern is that, as they multiply, they will attract the ire of the anti-bunny faction, as did the coyote (coyotes?) after the Colony was dismantled. Traps, guns and worse were mentioned. Before we reach that point, I am hoping we can find a way to manage the bunny explosion or, at least, control their appetite for pricey landscaping.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Longboat Key

North End Beach Parking is Out of Control

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Debbie Murphy

Each weekend/holiday, the north end flips from being residential zone property to being the Manatee County public beach. I am referring to North Shore Road, Firehouse Road, Broadway and the Whitney Beach Plaza Parking lot. I am sure you are well aware.

Hundreds of people arrive, looking to park anywhere they can. I will not mention the things I and others have seen; it’s not pretty. Our Police Department does the best they can. They are great. But the volume is overwhelming.

Nowhere else on Longboat Key is this allowed.

Next week the Town Commission will take up the issue of parking at the St Regis. The Commission should take up the issue of North end parking as well.

The south end gets preferential treatment while the north end gets stuck holding the bag. The south end gets a full Town Commission meeting in short order over a parking garage. The north end has been living with this problem since Covid and no Commission meetings.

Please ask for prompt inclusion on the Commission Agenda. All residents are entitled to have their parking concerns addressed by the Commission, not just the uber wealthy south end.

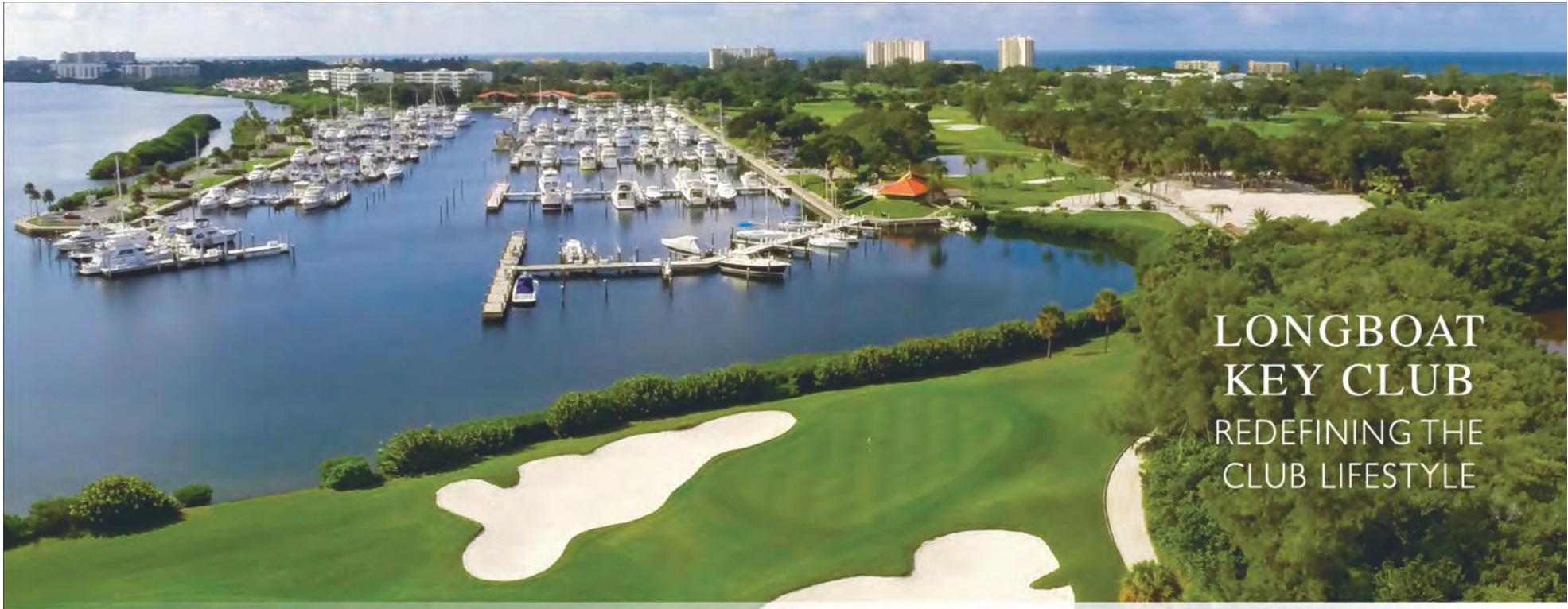
I raised this issue in the past and was told it’s all about money. Nobody asked the north end to accept the Beach money in exchange for the problems it created. Refuse the money and treat all LBK residents the same. The same limited parking that prevails up and down the rest of LBK should prevail on the north end. You are our representative. We look to you to solve this pressing problem.

Matt Schroeder
Longboat Key

North End Beach Parking is Out of Control

To: Matt Schroeder

See Letters, page 12



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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 11

I share your frustration with the chaotic parking we often experience here at the north end of LBK during the summer, especially during the holidays. I appreciate the excellent work of our Police Department in their enforcement of our existing parking restrictions.

As a new commissioner, I have much to learn on the administrative process, i.e.. how to bring community issues forward for consideration by the Commission. Here is what I am able to share in regards to having your voice heard:

1. Let your views be known in person at a Commission meeting. There is time set aside at every meeting for residents to speak.
2. Get in touch with your representative on Longboat Key North and let them know your concerns in regards to what you have shared with me. This advocacy group is very effective in creating awareness on issues of common concern to be acted on by the Commission. If you don't know who your representative is on LBK North, please let me know and I will make the introduction.

If this summer's parking problems are anything like what I experienced last summer, I found them to be the worst between Memorial Day and July 4th. After that, the demand for public beach parking at the north end dropped off considerably.

Adding to our woes is the unfinished parking lot at Coquina Beach. Completing this construction and opening up the additional parking spaces for public beach access in this parking lot will take pressure off the beach goers who seek parking in our neighborhoods.

Unfortunately, I was not privy to the negotiations with Manatee County when the public parking places were established on North Shore, Broadway and Firehouse Lane. I am happy to arrange a meeting with the Town Manager to explore what options may be available to alleviate the parking chaos we experience here on the north end. Please let me know how I may be of further assistance.

Debbie Murphy
Commissioner
Longboat Key

North End Beach Parking is Out of Control

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Debbie Murphy
Thank you for replying to my email. I too appreciate the excellent work of our Police Department.

I am planning on speaking about this issue in the time allotted for residents at the Monday June 5 meeting. And I am well aware of the LBK North Association--our Association is an active member.

What feels so unfair is the south end has a problem with a parking garage and the whole Town hears about it; front page press, Town Commission meeting, etc. We have a bigger problem and yet not a mention or concern expressed.

Governments are supposed to treat their citizens equally--the heart of the Equal Protection Clause.

I hope you keep making these key fundamental points.
Matt Schroeder
Longboat Key

Dangerous incidents at US 41 and BOTA intersection

To: Sarasota City Commission
I am writing to you as a very concerned citizen and year-round resident of the Rosemary District. Below is a short list of dangerous behaviors and situations which I have personally witnessed many times just over the past couple of months at the intersection of Tamiami Trail and Blvd of the Arts.

Individually, any one of these could possibly be addressed by some remedial traffic safety action. Collectively, however, they represent the high likelihood of a serious accident and therefore the urgent need for a more comprehensive and effective overhaul of the intersection's design.

I recognize that some changes have been made recently in signage and traffic control technology for the intersection. However, given the persistence of near-miss scenarios, these are clearly inadequate to protect pedestrians and motorists alike from harm.

These are the key scenarios which I feel need urgent attention:
Drivers dangerously speeding down the Blvd of the Arts hill heading west from Cocoanut Ave in order to make the light. Visibility of the intersection – including US 41 traffic and pedestrian activity - is constrained by the Boulevard on the left and the Indigo Hotel on the right.

Drivers ignoring the pedestrian right of way crossing light and the overhead “Yield to Peds” light when turning into US 41 in either direction from Blvd of the Arts.

Drivers accelerating after the Fruitville roundabout and speeding north on US 41 through the intersection, oftentimes with engines roaring, resulting in extreme noise pollution audible in the neighborhood.

Pedestrians failing to hit the correct button to activate the crossing light. The increase in foot traffic by visitors to the Bay Park brings many pedestrians who do not appear to be familiar with the pedestrian crossing buttons. Many will press the nearest but incorrect button, assuming it activates the light for the direction in which they intend to cross.

There have been numerous motor vehicle accidents at the intersection in recent months. In at least one case, pedestrians narrowly escaped being hit by the vehicles by just seconds.

This intersection is a preventable and potentially lethal accident site waiting to happen. If there are substantive plans in the works to address this problem location, please let me know. Due to the frequency of these incidents (and I'm clearly aware of only a few of what may be many more), I feel strongly that action is urgently needed to address this patently dangerous situation.

Dermot Somerville
Sarasota

Dangerous incidents at US 41 and BOTA intersection

To: Sarasota City Manager Marlon Brown

Thank you for your email per Blvd of the Arts and US 41 traffic and pedestrian safety issues. I have copied the City Manager and staff to respond with the detailed plans underway for improvements to This intersection. It is my understanding that staff is seeking community input and feedback now so your email timing is perfect. Looking forward to their response,

Jen Ahearn-Koch
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Dangerous incidents at US 41 and BOTA intersection

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch

I am wondering when I might expect further information regarding plans for the US 41 and BOTA intersection improvements. If there is anything else I can do to help move this along, I would be happy to do so.

Dermot Somerville
Sarasota

Dangerous incidents at US 41 and BOTA intersection

To: Dermot Somerville

Thank you for your email expressing your concerns about the US 41 and BOTA intersection improvements. We appreciate your dedication to the safety of our community. I'm glad to inform you that detailed plans for the improvements are underway by the City. The intersection referenced is a state intersection and therefore I have copied in FDOT to follow up on any additional details.

To ensure community involvement and gather valuable feedback, we plan on holding a public meeting later this fall. During this meeting, we will share updates on the progress as we move from the 30 percent plans to the 60 percent plans. You will be notified of the meeting well in advance so that you can attend and contribute to the discussion.

Your willingness to support and assist in moving this project forward is greatly appreciated. We value your involvement, and we encourage you to continue providing feedback and suggestions throughout the process. Together, we can work towards a comprehensive and effective overhaul of the intersection's design, addressing the safety concerns you have raised.

Once again, thank you for your vigilance and commitment to the well-being of our community. If you have any further questions or require additional information, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Nikesh Patel
City Engineer
City of Sarasota

Hot Car Safety in the Summer

To: Sarasota City Public Relations Director Jan Thornburg

Query: James Hill requested a statement and/or interview from Sarasota PD at 10:37 a.m. on Sunday June 5, 2023, regarding safety this summer and preventing hot car deaths. He asked for an interview for 2 p.m. on Sunday.

Response: Communications Specialist provided a statement utilizing the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's best practices at <https://www.nhtsa.gov/child-safety/you-can-help-prevent-hot-car-deaths> Also encouraged the reporter to reach out to Sarasota Emergency Services for perspective from fire-rescue.

The reporter requested Zoom and emailed a statement on hot car deaths. Communications Specialist provided the following:

One of the best ways for parents and caregivers to prevent hot car deaths is by getting in the habit of checking the backseat before you exit your vehicle and locking your doors.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has great tips to ensure you don't forget to look: Place your purse or cell phone next to your child's car seat so that you will always check the back seat before leaving the car. You can also keep a stuffed animal or another toy in the child's car seat when it's empty. Move it to your front passenger seat as a visual reminder when your child is in the car with you. Finally, set a rule for your childcare provider and have them call you if your child doesn't arrive as scheduled.

Also, make sure you lock your car doors. The NHTSA reports that another leading cause of hot car deaths is sometimes children enter unlocked and unattended vehicles.

Coordination: Sarasota Police Communications Specialist

Note: The story aired at 6:30 p.m. and 11 p.m. Sunday, June 5, 23, Reporter did not use the statement SPD provided.

Genevieve Judge
Public Information Officer
City of Sarasota

Hot Car Safety in the Summer

To: Sarasota City Police Chief Rex Troche

Would you also provide warnings pertaining to leaving senior citizens with dementia in cars

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WineTimes

Memorable Tastes from New Orleans to Longboat Key

Next, one of the cleverest preparations we have seen: Ahi Watermelon Nigiri. If you told us tuna is the main ingredient, we would believe you.

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

Some tastes linger in your memory and call you back to the places where you enjoyed them. We remember the Trout Mandich with mirlitons at Mandich’s in New Orleans, the baked stuffed lobster at Locke-Ober’s in Boston (1875-2012), Shrimp and Grits at Vidalia in Washington DC, all ghosts now, and the thriving d’Array’s Verandah’s grilled lamb chops with Shiraz at the d’Arenberg Vineyards in the McLaren Vale outside Adelaide Australia. We continue looking for memorable tastes.

Planta

We found several candidates when we dined recently at an interesting restaurant, Planta, in Bethesda Maryland. Planta restaurants at its multiple locations (Miami, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Toronto, Bethesda Maryland, DC, and Atlanta) are completely vegan: no meat, no dairy, no eggs, no fish, and no cheese. Like most diners, we are not looking for a vegan meal. We still had that feeling until the first plate arrived: Unagi Eggplant Nigiri, AKA vegan Sushi: such a wonderful dish that if you closed your eyes you would taste fresh-water eel, but no fish, sorry. So good we had to get another one. The really unique feature of this dish has to be truffles in miso.

So far, so good. Next up, 1000 Layer Crispy Potatoes. Wow. So perfectly baked: super thin potatoes cooked to perfection. The dish was much lighter than you would expect from the description on the menu. What a gem. Light and layered potatoes, you can’t go wrong.

Next, one of the cleverest preparations we have seen: Ahi Watermelon Nigiri. If you told us that it had tuna as the main ingredient, we would believe you. But it’s true vegan. If you are looking for one reason to dine at Planta, this is it.

Planta has great bar for just a drink or for a full dinner. Signature Cocktails are a must, especially the Mez-Cal Me Maybe (ginger liqueur, passionfruit, lime) as a starter. Planta gives plant-based dishes a good name. The exotic tastes of its vegan dishes and drinks do indeed linger in your memory.

Tia Queta in Betheda Maryland

We have frequented a nearby restaurant in Bethesda, Tia Queta, since 1980, when it opened near the current location. We have always ordered the Enchiladas de Mole. The style of enchilada has changed over the years, from tightly rolled tortillas to folded tortillas and something in between, yet the important constant in the dish, the Mole, has not. It tastes as if it comes from the same simmering pot on the stove. Savory flavors mixed with slightly sweet and bitter chocolate tastes remind us of the youngest daughter’s enchanted cooking in the movie, Like Water from Chocolate. The intense taste of Mole Poblano is easy to remember.

La Villa

A new taste favorite has a long tradition in Mexican cooking. We have very likely enjoyed it without knowing anything about it. During a return visit to La Villa in Longboat Key Florida, we were exploring the menu and decided to try the Panuchos. This dish has a Tostado (fried tortilla) topped with refried beans first, and then Cochinita Pibil, lettuce, and pickled onions, in the style of a Tostado Compuesto. The key element of the Panuchos is the Cochinita Pibil (meaning little pig marinated in orange juice and cooked slowly in a pit or covered pan). This

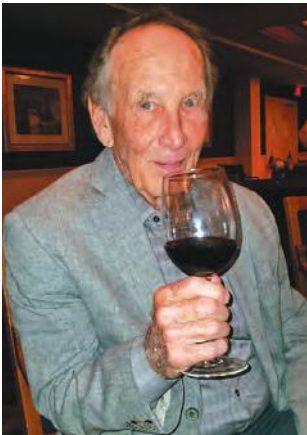


PHOTO COURTESY OF PLANTA RESTAURANT

traditional Yucatec Mayan dish, in turn, has a healthy dose of the spice Achiote, which consists of dried and ground Annatto seeds, often augmented with other spices and herbs. Coating meat with achiote paste, for example, adds a vibrant orange red color to the meat and flavors to the juices the meat releases when heated. Achiote adds color and a pungent taste, savory, nutty, and slightly sweet, to pork shoulder. Shredded pork shoulder on top of the refried beans with greens completes the dish. The Panuchos have an achiote sauce that creates a taste sensation. Not to be missed.

A diner need not understand the backstories of traditional dishes to appreciate their memorable tastes. Knowing that these recipes, handed down generation to generation from early Mesoamerica to the present day, gives us glimpses into the wisdom of these indigenous civilizations.

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

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

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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 12

alone when media requests like this are received?

As a former caregiver, I know the difficult choice between the dangers of a hot car and wandering versus the difficulty of making a “quick stop” accompanied by a confused and reluctant adult. I suspect many “Silver Alerts” result from being unattended in a vehicle. (We asked the police for assistance twice). Thank you for keeping us all safe.

Debbie Trice
Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Hot Car Safety in the Summer

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Debbie Trice

Thank you for the input. I do not believe we have done a PSA regarding the dangers of leaving someone with Dementia or Alzheimer's in the past. We will work on something to be posted soon.

Rex Troche
Police Chief
City of Sarasota

**I don’t want to be another
Surfside condominium**

To: Sarasota City Commission

On May 16th, I sent the email below to the planning board and the city commissioners about my concerns regarding the safety associated with the proposed construction of a super high rise at 1260 Palm Ave. I have had no response to that email. I am writing today to add another item to my list of concerns and to respectfully ask for a response. Safety

is not a subject to be casually dismissed. This is not about aesthetics or about financial gain or about the will of many vs. the will of a few. It is about the safety of your constituents which I know you take very seriously.

I am sure that most if not all these points are being actively discussed and will be mitigated as a part of the plan approval process. However, as a recipient of the consequences, I would like to know what is being discussed and what measures will be taken to address these concerns before the decision, not after it or even worse, after the damage has already been done. So please respond and educate us on what is being done for each of the points below.

The final item I'd like to add to the list below may be one of the most important.

9). Since this will be the tallest building in Sarasota, is our fire department equipped to handle it? Do we have trucks with ladders and hoses tall enough to be able to handle fire control on the highest floors? Do we have a fire management process in place for extra tall high rises full of elderly and incapacitated people? Given the non-existent set back, what if anything do we have in place for automated fire alarms for adjacent buildings? What if any studies have been done to determine if the gap between this new building and it's closes buildings will prevent fire from jumping from one building to another?

Sakti Kunz
Sarasota

**I don’t want to be another Surfside
condominium**

To: Sarasota City Commission

I'm one of your constituents and voters. There are hundreds of us that are deeply concerned about the safety and lack of due diligence associated with the proposed development at 1260 Palm.

We know all of you care and all of you take your responsibilities to protect us and keep us safe very seriously. With that in mind, please keep asking the hard questions about the structural safety of the proposed building and the surrounding buildings during and after construction as compared to the hazards that exist today.

I am not a structural engineer, but I am an engineer who works with wind turbines and vibration based analytics. I've also spent the last 25 years working and visiting Manhattan where I've seen taller and taller buildings being built in smaller and smaller footprint. So I know enough to be dangerous and I'm worried. Here are a few of my sources of worry:

1). How deep is the bedrock under Sarasota, do we know what the RQD (Rock Quality Designation) is? Based on that do we know how deep 1260 has to dig to maintain its current height under cat 5 hurricane pressures?

2). Based on the narrow setback requirements in the city and the recent spate of low setback constructions on South Palm, do we know what the vibration damage is to adjacent properties from those foundations? Do we know how much deeper 1260 will have to dig proportionate to its height. Can we extrapolate damage probability from these deeper wider holes? Do we have certified findings from structural engineers of your choosing paid for by the developer through your office so there is no evidence of malpractice or tampering?

3). How will the tall thin structure handle Cat 5 hurricane wind and associated water surge when that occurs in downtown Sarasota. You notice, I say when not if.

4). I suspect just as in Manhattan a flexible structure that sways is in the proposed design. Do we know the degree of sway and the corresponding resonance and wind battery that will be caused to the neighboring buildings based on that swaying?

5). Has a Cat 5 wind Venturi effect study been done to understand the impact this massive structure will have on the neighboring buildings?

6). Has provisions been made about what happens if construction has to be halted mid-way for any reason (e.g. the delay at One Park). Given this is a first of its kind construction I suspect there will be a lot of surprises.

On a smaller scale:

7). What type of glass will be used to ensure flying glass damage to the open courtyard and hallways of the neighboring garage, bridge and buildings are prevented?

8). Losing the walkway on Cocoanut when Marriott built Art Ovation (to accommodate their driveway) makes walking on Cocoanut dangerous unless you cross over to the FST side and then cross over again. This was a mistake I would not want to repeat. We need to have access in the Bay side of Palm, during and after the construction. The same as there is now.

We love Sarasota. It's helps us and our family connect in ways you can't imagine. I want to live and love this city for a long time. I want to be sure our leaders, be they career public service, appointees or elected officials, are armed with the knowledge and information they need to judge the safety, feasibility and liability of such an enormous and first of its kind undertaking.

Please, please be wise and take your time to gather all information you need before making your decision. We don't want to be the victims of another Surfside Condominium just because a developer did not do the due diligence.

I realize we have no voice in this matter, but we do have the right to request that our safety be of the utmost consideration to you, those who hold our fate in your hands.

Sakti Kunz
Sarasota

EV charging stations

To: Sarasota City Commission

My wife and I recently bought two new electric vehicles and were shocked at the state of the charging stations at your Palm Ave. and State St. garages! Almost none of them work.

We spent 20 minutes at the Palm Ave. stations moving from plug to plug. They were all broken at the clip that holds the charging plug into the car. If that clip is not there, cars won't charge. Reviews on the stations report that they have been broken for over a year!

Come on, we can do better than this! I'm glad we did not really need a charge to get home, because we would have been out of luck.

Didn't the infrastructure bill contain money for EV stations? Can't you hold ChargePoint responsible for this? If so, I would highly recommend asking them to either repair or remove the chargers so working, maintained ones can be installed.

We thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We need to get on this right away, as EV sales are exploding nationwide. I've attached a chart for you.

David and Melissa Berry
Sarasota

Longboat Key News Sarasota City News

PO Box 8001
Longboat Key, FL 34228
941-387-2200
www.lbknews.com

Steve Reid, Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Associate Publisher
Melissa Reid

Sales
Lillian Sands
Steve Reid
ads@lbknews.com

Graphic Production
Dottie Rutledge

Letters to the Editor
letters@lbknews.com

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One of the best values for a single-family pool home, behind the gates of the Bay Isles community. The 3BR/2BA plan has been modified to a 2BR plus office, with a laundry area on the same level.



BIRD KEY
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GRAND BAY V
3080 GRAND BAY BLVD., #532 • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$899,000

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BEACHPLACE
1095 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #504 • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$1,015,000

Breathtaking views through windows and sliders of high-impact glass from this 2BR/2BA updated residence. Includes 2 assigned parking spaces. Beachplace offers favorable rental terms.



SEA GATE CLUB
2425 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #6A • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$1,795,000

Indulge in the ultimate Longboat Key lifestyle with this stunning 6th floor, furnished 2BR/2BA corner residence with recent renovations designed to open the living spaces.



COUNTRY CLUB SHORES
510 CHIPPING LANE • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$1,795,000

Classic 3BR/2BA, canal front residence presenting the opportunity to update to your taste, build new on a fantastic lot, or take advantage of rental income potential. New seawall currently being installed.



GRAND BAY III
3030 GRAND BAY BLVD., #316 • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$2,495,000

Panoramic golf, city, bay and marina views from this 3BR/3BA residence in one of the best locations in Grand Bay. Popular Antigua floor plan, featuring an expansive, extended terrace.



LONG BEACH
7105 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #11 • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$995,000

Beautifully done, 2BR/2BA, furnished corner residence, with first level access to the finest in beachfront living. The redone kitchen seamlessly opens to the living and dining areas, where sliding doors in the living room lead to the fully covered and screened terrace.



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