

Newsletter

Spring 2020



4207 Existing Homes 4211
67th Ave. Circle East

Looking North on Lockwood Ridge
Entrance to Medallion Development will be Here, Opposite
67th Ave. Circle East

New Lake

Planned Five Story Residences
Above, Artist Conception

ALSO, IN THIS ISSUE

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My Summer Project for Palm Aire Communities Council

There's an Osprey in Our Masthead

Samuel Morse, An Artist Who Changed the World

Do You Want a Five Story Building in Your Neighborhood?

Carlos Miguel Beruff has finally revealed his plan for developing the property at the intersection of the northeast corner of Whitfield Avenue and Lockwood Ridge. For years, he has been renting cows and keeping bees on the property to reduce his tax liability utilizing Florida's Green Belt Law which has let him devalue the land because it is classified as farmland for grazing cattle. He is planning to build seven five-story apartment buildings, and he has asked for a zoning variance to construct five stories.

Do five-story apartment buildings fit into our neighborhoods? For a radius of about five miles, there are single-family homes, shared villas and condominiums. None are five stories. The closest five-story building is in Sarasota, eight miles away. There is one four-story condominium at 7451 Country Club Drive North, nearly two miles away. If one drives through the various neighborhoods, the answer is obvious—a resounding no to five story buildings. Construction of this sort is out of line with existing structures when one considers the style, the height, the aesthetics and the existing buildings in the neighborhoods around Palm Aire.

What is the purpose of zoning? The purpose is to promote the health, safety, morale, and general welfare of the community, to protect and conserve the value of buildings to ensure continuity and encourage the most appropriate use of the land. It appears that seven five-story multi-family buildings are outside the norm for our neighborhoods, and the County Commissioners, the Manatee County Planning Task Force and the Special Planning Commission should recognize and adhere to the importance of the purposes of zoning.

Sometime over the years, the property was quietly rezoned. Currently, the property at 4831 Whitfield Avenue has dual zoning Agricultural and Multi-Family Develop-

See *Five Story Buildings*, page 3

Some Thoughts from the President's Desk

Spring 2020
PACC Palm Aire Communities Council

I hope you are all safe and well during this most challenging time. Never in my worst nightmare could I have envisioned the current situation with the COVID-19 virus. Like you, I am doing the best I can to keep busy and active—walking several times a day, reading and doing tasks that have been left undone far too long. In cleaning out closets, drawers and cabinets, I have found "stuff" that I didn't even know I had. I'm sure Goodwill and other good causes will be overwhelmed with donations from all of us once they are back in business.

We canceled the March meeting of Palm-Aire Community Council, Inc., due to the directive regarding meetings in light of the pandemic. We were able to meet via conference calling in April allowing us to get essential business completed. We had eighteen PACC members participate. The budget for 2020-2021 was approved and Officers were put in place. The new officers are:

Barbara Robinson – President

Blake Jones – Vice President

Susan Romine – Treasurer/Secretary

Also, the Directors unanimously approved a motion giving authority to the PACC Board to make necessary and timely decisions during these extraordinary times. As soon as the current emergency is relieved, we will return to our regular procedures and meeting schedule.

A May meeting has been scheduled in the hopes that we will be able to meet face to face. In the event that does not happen, we will meet via telephone conference.

Your Palm-Aire Community Council Board hopes that you continue to be safe and well.



The Palm Aire Communities

Avista	Country Lakes	Lakeside Woods
Broadmoor Pines	Desoto Woods	The Links
Club Villas I	Eagle Creek	Misty Oaks
Club Villas II	Eagle Creek Villas	Pine Trace
Clubsides	Fox Pointe	Rosewood
Condo B	Fairway Lakes	Timberlake Village
Condo C (Fairway Point)	Fairway Six	Woodlake Villas
Condo D	Gardens	Woodland Green
Conservatory Estates	Golf Pointe	

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From 7719 Broadmoor Pines

...simply persistent.

Five Story Buildings

Continued From front page.

ment-6 (MFD-6). Manatee County has established MFD-6 zoning to mean that per acre a maximum of six units at a maximum height of 35' can be built.

Issues Related to the Medallion Proposal

1. The plan is inconsistent with the homes that have been developed in our neighborhoods.
2. Potentially, the plan will decrease our property values.
3. It is a high density development that is contrary to the original plans for the areas around Palm Aire.
4. The development would cause increased congestion, giving rise to traffic issues and potential increased crime.
5. The streets in the area are not wide enough to handle the increased congestion.
6. There is no plan for environmental concerns.
7. Water run-off would be an issue, since the area is a wetland located on a creek and Rattlesnake Slough.
8. There are infrastructure concerns: fire protection, police protection, EMS, sewage, drainage, lift stations, etc.
9. Parking at the site with high rise buildings is not sufficient to accommodate the population who will reside there. Especially since the developer has requested a variance to reduce parking from two spaces per unit to 1.8.

So let's do the math. There are 52 acres multiplied by 6 units equals 312 maximum units. Initially, the developer planned for 202 units, but a while back he increased it to 320 units or 8 units over the maximum. Records indicate that there will be as many as 430 units and word is that there could be as many as 750 units.

Beruff's latest plan is for his firm, Medallion Homes, to build high-rise residences on the property. Originally, they intended to build four-story buildings. Now the company is seeking approval for a

county zoning change to build seven five-story buildings on those 52 acres. This zoning change request cannot be approved unless both the Planning Commission and the County Commissioners both vote in favor of it. There will be public hearings on this matter.

Time to do more math. In residential multi-family buildings, the typical height of a story is 12 feet. That makes each building 60 feet tall (12 x 5) excluding a roof. Medallion's plans call for a slanted roof. So, we'll add another 10 feet for that and we now have seven 70' buildings to be built. The typical height of a two story house is 30 feet and a one story is around 15 feet. So, then Medallion's planned apartments will be $2\frac{2}{3}$ to $4\frac{2}{3}$ times the height of the residences in our neighborhoods.

According to Manatee County building codes for MFD-6, the "Maximum building height shall be 35'". Building heights can, however, be greater than 35' near the interstate interchanges, major arterials and Community Redevelopment Areas. Any proposal over 35' requires a public hearing. Building heights greater than 45' can only be achieved with public hearings."

The first meeting is scheduled and will be held by the Manatee County Planning Task Force and the Special Planning Commission on **June 25, 2020 (Save the Date!)**, to consider the project now known as the *Whitfield-Lockwood Residential Project General Development plan for an Apartment Facility*. Meetings regarding the Whitfield-Lockwood Residential Project are open to the public and you are encouraged to attend.

If you agree that the Medallion proposal is detrimental to our property, then you should write a personal letter or email to each of the below-named individuals.

Planning Commission and Members of the Board of Supervisors

Achaia Brown, Manatee County Planning Commission
Bobbi Roy, Manatee County Planning Commission
Priscilla Trace, Manatee County Board of Supervisors
Reggie Bellamy, Manatee County Board of Supervisors
Steve Jonsson, Manatee County Board of Supervisors
Misty Servia, Manatee County Board of Supervisors
Vanessa Baugh, Manatee County Board of Supervisors
Carol Whitmore, Manatee County Board of Supervisors
Betsy Benac, Manatee County Board of Supervisors

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betsybenac@mymanatee.org

Club Villas II at Palm Aire

by M. Puca and J. Smith

As you leave the Palm Aire Country Club parking lot, you would be just about home now since the community entrance is directly across the street.

This means only a short walk or golf cart ride for our residents to enjoy PACC's Wacky Wednesday or to use the golf and sports facilities.



The Club Villas II at Palm Aire Condominium Association, Inc. (CVII) is a deed restricted and maintenance-free community incorporated in December 1988. The site was previously occupied by the former



DeSoto Lakes Golf and Country Club which was razed after the present Palm Aire Country Club (PACC) was built in 1985. CVII comprises thirteen acres and has a total of forty units, seventeen paired villas and two triplex villas. The initial buildout oc-

curred during 1988. The remaining buildings were constructed over the next few years. The last building was completed in 1994. Most units were built with one of two floor plans each about 1850 square feet with two bedrooms and den, two full baths, kitchen side patios and two-car garages. Most units now have year-around lanais.

The structure for governing the community includes five Board positions and nine Committees. Board posi-



tions are for one-year terms on a calendar year basis. The 2019 budget for the community is \$180,000 with \$1,125 quarterly condo fee payments. Over the past year or so the community has begun to take a more strategic approach for budget planning and execution. Projects approved for 2019 include a restatement of the governing documents which are 30 years old, an independent reserve study of capital assets, and replacement of obsolete roadway lighting and an aging swimming pool pump/ filter system.

In addition to maintaining the community, there is a calendar of social activities for unit owners including "snowbird" arrival and departure dinners, game nights, holiday parties, themed happy hours and special events such as recognition of Earth Day. This year CVII hosted a PACC water aerobics pot luck and a PACC Tennis Club event.

CVII is considered a very desirable place to live for both year-round and seasonal owners. Evidence includes several units occupied by original owners and very little turnover of units. The few units that have sold in the past several years remain on the market for only short periods. The location and the small number of units make CVII an ideal choice for homebuyers.

Palm Aire Communities Council Board Update

Susan Romine, Secretary/Treasurer

Our January and February board meetings were busy.

We thanked Jerry Swink for taking the reins of the MSTU Committee. As a certified arborist, Jerry is perfect for the job. Jerry worked for Manatee County, so he knows who to contact.

Didn't you love the Fall Newsletter? People stopped me in the street to tell me how good it was. We thanked Dan Reeves, our Editor/Publisher. Thanks for all you do, Dan.

Our President, Barbara Robinson, has been in contact with the subcontractor regarding the cell tower on Timberlake Drive.

The tower had to be moved from outside the sidewalk to inside the walk due to traffic safety concerns. Since the tower is in such a wide-open place (couldn't it be at a corner?) I asked Barbara to relay a request for trees or bushes to camouflage the base of the tower.

We welcomed back former member Country Lakes. Bill Eiffert will be the representative.

In February, County Commissioner Vanessa Baugh came to speak.

She was scheduled to speak about Stormwater Fees, but by the time the meeting rolled around, those fees had been put back on the shelf. I moved here from Orlando in 1974 and Stormwater Fees were being discussed then, and I think back in the 50s also. On and on it goes.

Vanessa very lightly brushed the subject of the development at the intersection of Whitfield and Lockwood Ridge. She cannot discuss the details of the project, so she spoke in generalities of zoning. She discussed her decision to run for a third term, and her desire to dedicate her service to the community.

Our new website is live. A HUGE thank you to Cathy Allen for all the work she did to bring us to the 21st Century. You can find us by searching for either palmairecommunities.com or palmairecommunityconcil.com.

Regarding the development at the northeast corner of Whitfield Avenue and Lockwood Ridge Road, the board went on record, via motion, to oppose construction since the proposed multi-story housing units are not compatible

with existing single and multiple dwellings within the Palm Aire area.

Our Annual Meeting and Election of Officers was scheduled for March; however, due to COVID-19, the meeting was canceled.

Because people are respecting coronavirus quarantine, our April 15th Board meeting was held via teleconference. The main business conducted, according to our by-laws was as follows

1. Certifying the Directors appointed by the associations
2. Adopted the 2020-21 Fiscal Year Budget
3. The Nominating Committee presented a slate of officers that was approved by the membership. All officers will continue in their current roles, Barbara Robinson, president; Blake Jones, vice-president; Susan Romine, secretary-treasurer.

Our new webmaster, Cathy Allen, has been busy making updates to our new site. You can access the site via palmairecommunities.com or palmairecommunitycouncil.com.



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Chang Kao Restaurant Review

By Susan Romine

Spring 2020

PACC Palm Aire Communities Council

My husband said, "Let's go have Thai food." We went to Chang Kao at 6233 14th Street West in Bradenton.

The restaurant's name when translated from Thai means white elephant which is the sacred elephant symbolizing royal power of the king in Thailand's culture. When ever they are found they are ceremoniously presented to the king.

We were greeted by owner Brian Oliver and dined on delicacies cooked by his wife Parcharee Tunkaniltert.

I didn't know I liked Thai food, but that meal began a custom of visiting the restaurant every seven to ten days. We have worked



our way through the menu and everything is a winner, it is fresh, and even has a great presentation.

There are the popular items such as Pad Thai and Drunken Noodles. There are Fried Rices. The Appetizers and the entire menu are a delight to review.

My husband alternates the Crispy Duck Teriyaki each time. I alternate Rice and Noodles.

The shopping center is old, and most of their business is Door-Dash, UberEats, and Bite Squad, but it is worth the trip.

The dessert menu is fun, but I will rap your knuckles if you touch my Tempura Cheesecake.

They are open 11:00 to 3:00 for lunch and 4:30 to 9:00. Saturday; they open at 12:00.

Check their website at



Your advertisement will reach more than 2500 readers of the Palm Aire Newsletter through direct mail delivery and online service. Our press run is about 2500 copies available at local businesses and at the Palm Aire Country Club.



4 facts

1. An estimated 48 billion robocalls were made last year. Typically there are 169.6 million placed each day, and 1,963 every second.
2. On average, a gallon of gasoline costs about twice as much as the comparable cost to run an electric car. The average cost per mile in an all electric car is about 3.6¢. The average for a gasoline powered sedan is 59.2¢.
3. Americans spent \$31 billion last year on bottled water. In the U.S., and Americans went through about 50 billion plastic water bottles last year with a dismal 23 percent recycling rate. A North American study last year found that 22 million pounds of plastic goes into the waters of the Great Lakes each year.
4. A 2019 study found that people who drank only bottled water consumed, on average, 90,000 microplastic particles annually. Tap water water drinkers drink fewer particles. They only consume 9,000 plastic particles a year.

Citizens for Conforming Development for Whitfield and Lockwood Ridge

On Tuesday, February 11, 2020, a meeting held at the Palm Aire Country Club was called to discuss the Whitfield-Lockwood Residential Project. The meeting was organized by Bob Webb (President of Carlyle), Stephanie Flnell, Leon Sickles both from Treymore and John Lannacone from the Cascades. There were more than 300 people at the meeting, none of whom were in favor of the proposal by Medallion Homes to build nonconforming apartments at the corner of Whitfield Avenue and Lockwood Ridge Road.

In the opinion of the leadership, a letter-writing campaign should be initiated by all residents. They have concluded that unique personal letters to the Planning Commission and County Commissioners make a stronger impact than a petition.

It was proposed that a steering committee be established to develop a plan of action and to organize community participation at county hearings. After the meeting, many volunteers signed-up to work on this committee which is now known as Citizens for Conforming Development for Whitfield and Lockwood Ridge. They developed a mission statement, and they issued a notice of their concerns and plans that was delivered to all of the residences along the Whitfield-Lockwood Ridge corridor.

Their distress is that the apartments will impact all residents in the area, and listed the following detriments:

Effects on Property Values.

- Will these apartments decrease your home values, especially for those communities directly adjacent to the planned development?
- Apartments vs. Condos. The constant changeover in persons living in apartments vs. a more stable, consistent ownership for condos.
- The current homes in the adjacent and nearby areas are almost all single-family. The vast majority are individual homes. Some are paired villas, and a few are multi-family, but those are all owned condos and only two stories tall.

Increased Traffic.

- Potential for 640 or more cars many of which will be entering and exiting the area during rush hours on already congested roads. Whitfield is a two-lane road with a 30-mph designation.
- There will be two entrances and exits. One will be opposite the Treymore development, creating confusion and congestion on a narrow road. The other will be just north of the traffic light on Lockwood Ridge opposite 67th Avenue East.
- Will increase time to cross the intersection between Whitfield and Lockwood Ridge.
- Will this traffic cause the County to reconsider widening Whitfield Road, and, what effect will this have on speed limits? 40 or 50 mph?

- Increased traffic will impact on egress and ingress to local communities due to traffic congestion and vehicle speeds.
- If speed limit increases, it will prohibit any use by golf carts riding on the shoulders.
- Lockwood Ridge would have similar problems; it is a 4-lane road, with much traffic during rush hours.

Drainage Issues.

- Increased water runoff and potential flooding during periods of heavy rains will impact upstream and downstream to Rattlesnake Slough and surrounding homes both east and west of Lockwood Ridge. This could possibly affect Federal guidance for flood insurance.

What has the Citizens for Conforming Development for Whitfield and Lockwood Ridge done so far?

The organization recognizes that any effort in this regard is very complex. The developer is well versed in all zoning, traffic and environmental regulations. For homeowners to properly fight this expansion from four-story to five-story buildings, parking and traffic concerns, as well as impacts on flooding and environmental wetland concerns, legal counsel is necessary.

Several attorneys were interviewed, and the Concerned Citizens received two separate and independent recommendations to retain Ralf Brookes, Esq. Ralf is based in Cape Coral and has experience in this type of effort. The effort needs a second expert, supplied by Mr. Brookes, who is an expert in zoning requirements and knowledgeable about Manatee County zoning and land use.

Once we are successful in convincing the County Zoning Officials and County Commissioners of our concerns, we can then address the overall concept of these buildings being non-conforming to existing and surrounding communities of thousands of homes.

What they need from you, the homeowners in the area:

The organization of Concerned Citizens needs agreement from residents that this proposed development will negatively affect our homes and realize the need to be represented by expert legal counsel.

The Concerned Citizens have been in discussion with their attorney and to meet the financial requirements a fund was established. Legal restraints forbid Homeowners Associations from contributing to these kinds of efforts; the money must come from individual homeowners. While any amount is welcomed, they have asked each household in the area will consider a minimum commitment of \$100 to cover the legal costs and other associated expenses with this effort.

For more information, please contact Bob Webb, President of Carlyle Community Association through his email address: webb4250@gmail.com

A Note from Manatee County Commissioner Vanessa Baugh

Spring 2020
PACC Palm Aire Communities Council



Commissioner Baugh addressing the Palm Aire Communities Council Meeting at the Country Club.

I've been receiving a flood of email lately about a project that's making its way through our planning process. Many of you have written asking about the Medallion Home request to rezone a 37-acre parcel on the northeast corner of Whitfield Avenue and Lockwood Ridge Road [PDR-1913(Z)(G)].

Because this case will become a quasi-judicial hearing that comes before the County Commission for consideration, I'm limited in what I can say about it. However, I can pass along the basics. The property currently has a Residential/Multi-Family zoning which means the property owner today -- without Commission approval -- could build six dwelling units per acre and structures of up to four stories. The applicant is requesting that the land be rezoned to Planned Development Residential which allows for a five-story structure and up to nine dwelling units per acre.

The rezoning request is now going through a mandatory review where County departments and eventually the County Attorney's Office evaluate whether the application is complete. Once a staff report is complete you'll have an opportunity to formally get involved. The proposal will come before the Planning Commission on June 25. Before the Planning Commission, mailers will be sent to neighbors (property owners within 500 feet of the property). At the Planning Commission, you'll have the opportunity to publicly make your concerns known during a public meeting. The Planning Commission will make a

recommendation to County Commissioners to approve or deny the rezoning request. Then, in another public hearing where you'll have the chance to speak, County Commissioners will have the final say.

It's tourist season and nowhere is that more evident than on our local roads! A drive to the downtown County Administration building normally takes me about 20 minutes. But this time of year it can take 40 minutes or longer! The County Commission has heard your demands for action and I'm happy to say that transportation funding will be the Board's top priority as we head into our spring budget talks. But I can tell you that financing expensive road construction and land acquisition aren't the only solutions to the intricate challenges surrounding transportation in a community like ours that grows by about 10,000 people a year. We have to be creative and open-minded for solutions that don't involve new roads. I'm always asking myself, how do we create more opportunities for people to get out of their cars and take a bus or bicycle to where they're going. How do we incentivize the creation of work centers near neighborhoods, so people don't have as far to travel when they go to work? If you have creative ideas to solve our transportation challenges, please let me know!

In closing, I just want to mention that the 2020 Census has arrived and to tell you that it's so, so important that you participate. I believe an accurate count in our community will reveal that Manatee County has now topped 400,000 residents. That's incredible growth when you consider that we've grown by 75,000 people since the 2010 Census! An accurate count ensures that we're properly represented in Washington D.C. and that we're pulling down all of the federal dollars we're eligible for. Those federal dollars go to pay for local transit, education, affordable housing and more. The Census results will also tell us where we need new schools, new clinics, new roads, and more services for families, older adults, and children. Please do your part by taking a few minutes to fill out the 2020 Census. Together we'll all Make Manatee Count!

You can contact Commissioner Baugh at vanessa.baugh@mymanatee.org

COVID-19 and Real Estate

To start, I hope all of you are well and safe. And your family and friends too.

So how has COVID-19 affected the real estate market?

I'm sure it's obvious that mostly all real estate has come to a halt but you would be surprised to find out that we are still selling and buying. Yes!! It's True!! How, you say?! Virtually for the most part. The world of Virtual transactions is upon us. And it has been pushed to the forefront thanks to the Corona Virus. Closing is taking longer. Actually 15-30 days longer but the job is getting done. This is in part due to the appraisers, surveyors, inspections, etc. taking longer to get into homes due to the virus.

So how will this affect the market once the country is open for business? Well, 30 days ago we were in a very strong market. We were experiencing low inventory with high values and the buyers were there with a lean toward a sellers' market.

A balanced market is 5-6 months of supply. In the higher-end market (over \$1 million) that would be a 9-12 month supply. What is yet to be seen is the pent up demand and how will it affect the market. We won't know until it happens.

I can say last week at my company we had over 400 sales and over 400 listings. That is low for this time of year but it tells you business is still going on. But with unemployment and the economy in a downward spiral it's fair to ask will it become a buyers' market. Frankly, it is too early to tell.

With that, here is a sample of the 31 properties sold from March 1, 2020 to April 14, 2020 in Palm Aire.



Julie Jacques, Realtor, GRI
 Michael Saunders and Company
 61 S. Blvd. of Presidents
 Sarasota, FL 34236
 941.323.1800 c
 941.388.4447
 juliejacques@michaelsaunders.com

Single-Family Homes

7805 Pine Trace Dr.	\$240,000
5775 Timberlake Dr.	\$329,850
5324 Creekside Trail	\$390,000
6992 Country Lakes Cir	\$424,750
7612 Links Court	\$441,000

Condominiums

7461 W. Country Club Dr., #304	\$115,000
7020 W. Country Club Dr. N.	\$151,000
7880 Palm Aire Lane #201	\$165,000
7070 Fairway Bend Ln. #169	\$212,000
6939 W. Country Club Dr. #161	\$230,000

Information provided by Steller MLS System and sold by various Realtors.

Did you know that our state has 1,000 springs, more than any other place Earth?

At 403 feet in depth Weeki Wachee is the deepest fresh water spring in North America.

Silver Springs, One of our largest springs, with a cavern opening nearly 60 feet wide was the No. 1 tourist destination in Florida before Disney World.

Several classic old Hollywood films were shot at Florida Springs including The Creature from the Black Lagoon, Mr. Peabody and the Mermaid, and multiple Tarzan movies.

Florida springs have a year-round water temperature of 70-75 degrees.

When I became Treasurer for PACC after Art Smith's 10-year reign (Thank you Art.), I took possession of three boxes/containers of documents dating back to 1985, when the organization was known as the Council of Presidents. The only members were Condos A, B, C, D, Golf Pointe, and the "Homeowners Association." Most of the other developments had not been built yet—mine, Woodland Green, was being developed, but not yet out of the ground.

In going through the documents, I determined which should be retained and which could be destroyed. Think...Bylaws and Minutes, retain—Bank Statements and Invoices, recycle.

One set of minutes in 1999 had a memorandum attached, which addressed an old issue of the Palm Aire Community Action Council purchasing the Activity Center/Library. The memo itself, is not important, but within the memo is an interesting history of the MSTU (Municipal Service Taxing Unit), so I would like to retype that portion of the memo (grammar issues and all) to give you history

"You probably remember PACAC was originally organized as the Council of Presidents to provide a voice to deal with FPA in negotiating the member takeover of the Club. At that time, the Council was composed of the President of the individual homeowner associations here...following the conclusion of the member takeover, the Council of Presidents subsequently reorganized as the Palm Aire Community Action Council, with an elected slate of officers, and committees to handle areas of concern which could impact on the community i.e. county legislation, roadways, drainage, flood control, airport noise, etc. and they planned regularly scheduled monthly meetings with homeowner association appointed delegated to PACAC in attendance.

Their meetings had a dual purpose (1) To hear reports from the various committee chairs, and

(2) To hear and discuss any new or old business which could have or was having an impact on the community.

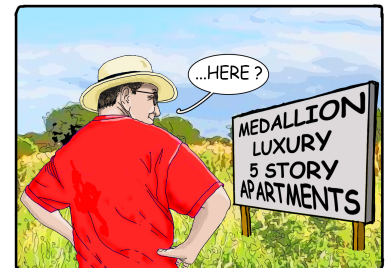
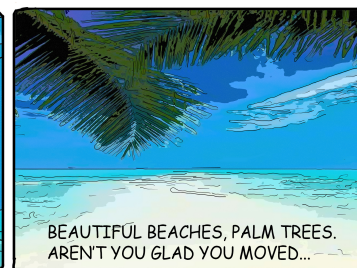
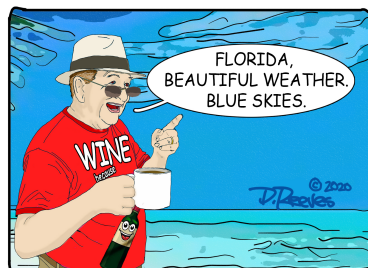
The Council had the immediate and urgent responsibility of organizing for the continued maintenance of all of Palm Aire's common grounds, grass, trees, etc. the cost of which now had to be borne by the residents....The Council set up a fee structure to cover the costs, but lacking enforcement authority, it had to rely on the individual homeowner associations to collect the appropriate fees from their residents voluntarily.

Voluntary contributions never received majority support from the community, the result of which was about 55% of the community was paying 100% of the cost for the whole community.

Enter Dick Montmeat with a proposal to have Palm Aire become a Manatee County MSTU (Municipal Services Taxing Unit) which meant if passed that EVERY property owner in Palm Aire on the Manatee County tax rolls would be billed on their annual tax bill for a fair share of the ground maintenance costs and contribution would no longer be voluntary.

It took two years of intensive campaigning and work, following the legislative requirements for petitions to be signed, etc. When it was all over, we had, and now continue to have, our MSTU in operation with PACAC committee people in charge of supervising the work done by the landscaping contractors hired by the County."

Many of you probably do not notice the line on your tax bill, but it is an important part of our neighborhood look. In 1990, the Palm Aire Communities Action Council became the Palm Aire Communities Council, Inc. We continue to monitor the landscaping contractors—even more so now that we had input into the bid documents.



There's an Osprey in Our Masthead

by Dan Reeves



Perhaps you've noticed that the masthead on the front and back page of each edition of our newsletter features wildlife found in and around Palm Aire. Ospreys are often seen flying over and diving into the lakes and ponds in our neighborhoods and were chosen to be part of our masthead design for the spring newsletter.

Ospreys, also known as fish hawks, eat a steady diet of fish. These amazing raptors are skillful fishers who more often than not will catch a fish whenever they plunge into the water feet first.

Ornithologists have found that out of every three or four dives they will come up with a fish—that's 25%-33% accuracy! They continually hone their fishing skills and become more skillful with age. Surprisingly, their parents do not teach them to fish. They innately know

and start fishing as soon as they are physically able.

Fish make up 99% of their diet; they only hunt other animals when fish are scarce. That's why you will only see them around



waterways, shorelines, lakes and ponds. These birds have longer wings than most birds which allow them to lift a heavy fish from the water while the Osprey is partially submerged and the fish is underwater. They can easily lift half of their mass and weight.

All birds have slightly curved talons; however, Ospreys have sharply curved powerful talons giving them greater piercing power to catch fish.

Ospreys are unusual among hawks, slightly smaller than an eagle, they have one toe on each foot that they can pivot backward that they use much like a thumb so that they can hold and manipulate their prey. Once they make a capture and while leaving the water they turn the fish around facing the wind reducing wind resistance as they aerodynamically fly away with their catch.

Unlike most fish-eating birds of prey, Osprey begin their dive headfirst as you would expect. Then as they get closer to the water they drop their feet and raise their wings and lower their feet so that they hit the water feet-first with their talons outstretched to grab the fish. The talons snap shut on the fish at 2/1000 of a second. They begin their dive at 30 miles per hour and accelerate up to 50 miles per hour when they hit the water.

When an Osprey dives into the water, a third eyelid—called a nictitating membrane—closes immediately to protect the bird's eyes. This semi-transparent membrane functions like underwater goggles enabling it to see in the water. While underwater, they have adapted valves that close their nostrils, to prevent

water from flowing into their lungs.



They are completely submerged when their talons grab the fish. They vigorously flap their wings to rise out of the water, soaked from head to talon and still fly away with the meal. They can hover while looking for a meal and can cruise at 80 mph.

Often they can be seen emerging from the water and shaking their bodies the way dogs do when they are wet.

The females usually choose their mates, and most pairs mate for life. Nevertheless, "divorce" has been observed if mating becomes unsuccessful. Ospreys have the highest nest-site fidelity of any birds and return to the same nest year after year.

Most North American Ospreys migrate to Central and South America for the winter. The ones we see in Palm Aire, for the most part, are not "snowbirds"; they're permanent residents and fish here throughout every season.

TO: The Twenty-six Communities of Palm Aire

My wife and I have been "snowbirds" in the Sarasota area for many years. Residents of Fairway Point for over ten years.

Over our time spent at Palm Aire, we have noticed that the WATER WAYS have become polluted during various times of each year. Reason being; the mowing crews blow their grass clippings into our water ways.



We have observed this grass clippings situation first hand, and the accumulated results. To us, at its worst, it looks like a "cess pool." Enclosed is a photo, taken from our lanai.

Besides being horrific looking water ways, our additional concern, is for the long range viability of our beautiful golf course. Many FL golf courses are struggling financially, with out the added issue of ugly water ways, which could cause a loss in memberships.

One possible solution, is for the president of each of our 26 Palm Aire communities, to contact their respective mowing crew supervision, and insist that they cease and desist blowing grass into the water ways. We have accomplished this at Fairway Point already.

This could be a first step, and could solve our shared problem.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb & Tom Bueltel

If you are looking for something new and interesting to do with you out-of-town friends take a look at Discover Sarasota Tours. They offer entertaining, interactive, and informative air-conditioned trolley tours of the most interesting, intriguing places, and amazing stories that shaped Sarasota's rich cultural past, and their fares are reasonably priced.

Founded by Tammy Hauser, her tour company is part entertainment, part history and as she says "a love story for Sarasota." She's lived elsewhere, but says Sarasota is the only place she ever chose to live. Her roots are in Theatre and she was a former arts administrator in Minnesota.

They use air-conditioned trolleys embarking from the Tour's Trolley Depot, a charming 1930s cottage at 1826 4th Street, with easy, free on-site parking behind the Breakfast House off Fruitville Road. They have 13 tour guides, one of whom, Jon MacDonald, lives in Palm Aire, and he attends our PACC meetings.





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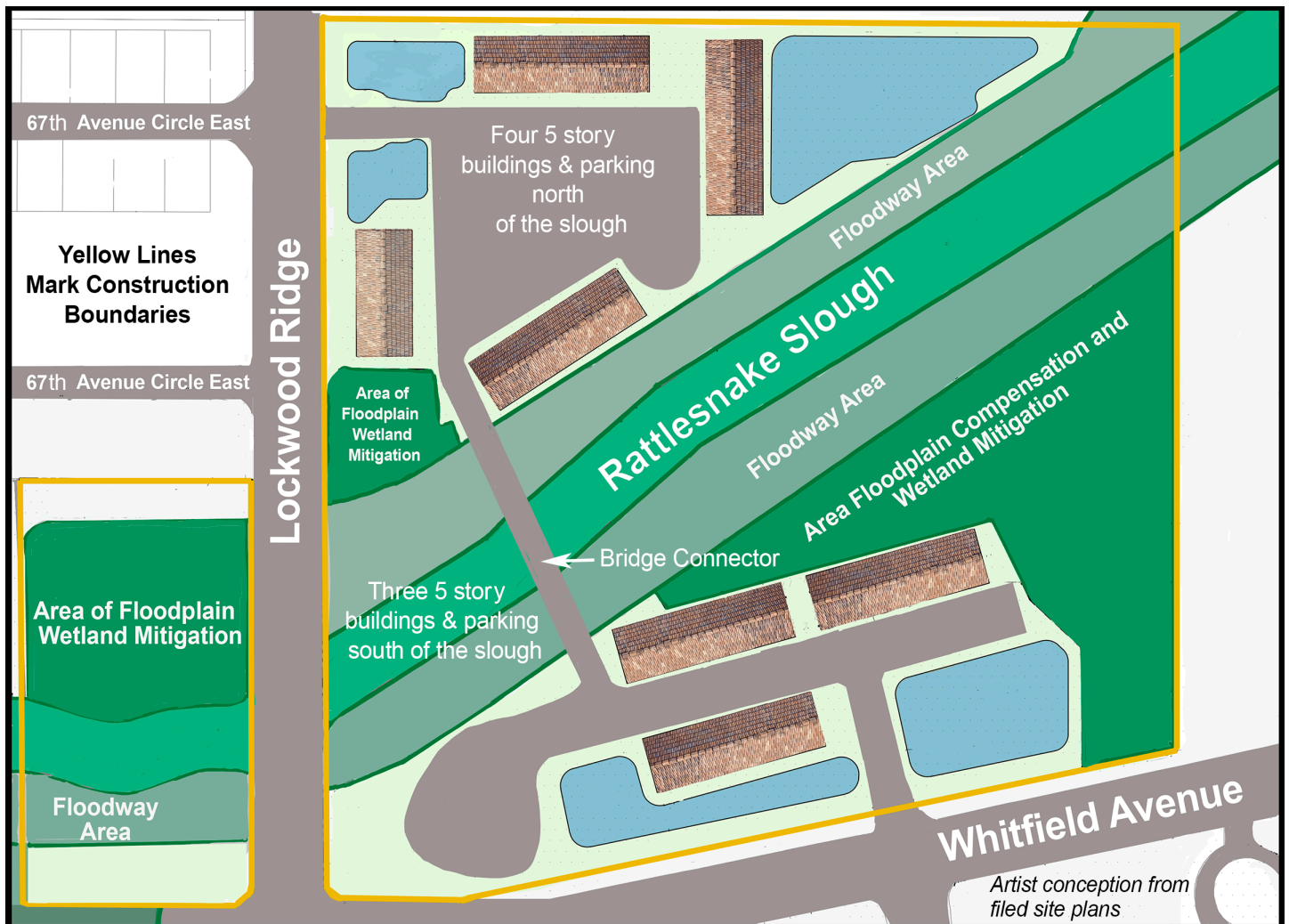
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Whitfield–Lockwood Residential Project Map

Spring 2020

PACC Palm Aire Communities Council



Action by the Palm Aire Country Club

Palm Aire Country Club's Board of Governors has voted to go on the record with the Manatee County Planning Commission voicing its concern and opposition to a proposed zoning change for the property at the corner of Lockwood Ridge and Whitfield Avenue. Board members have heard of the growing concern with a change in zoning to what is now a field used for grazing cattle. The approximately 37-acre property is currently zoned in a manner that would only allow single-family homes built.

Carlos Beruff's Medallion Homes is the developer of the project. In the request to change the zoning, the developer states the old zoning "...was based on the

previous market cycle. The current market cycle puts affordable rental units in high demand and in order to make them affordable, multiple story products are contemplated." The developer claims there will be access points to the project from Whitfield and Lockwood Ridge but claim they "...do not believe the proposed changes will have any substantial negative effects on the existing traffic patterns." Initial plans to include a commercial component have been dropped from the zoning change request. The project also includes a small parcel on the west side of Lockwood Ridge and appears to be necessary as part of its flood control design.

This zoning change request cannot be approved unless both the Planning Commission and the County Commissioners both vote in favor of it. The Palm Aire Country Club Board of Governors urges the members to contact the public officials via email and/or letter to let them know your concerns with this rezoning request. (See listing on page 3.)

Samuel Morse, An Artist Who Changed the World

Samuel Morse (1791-1872) a Connecticut native lived in New Haven as well as in New York City where he was Professor of Painting and Sculpture at the University of the City of New York. In 1824 he received

a handsome commission from the City to paint the portrait of Marquis de Lafayette, a supporter of the Revolution. The commission was for \$1,000, a small fortune at the time. To complete the commission Morse set up a temporary studio in Washington, D.C. where the Marquis was living.



The portrait was coming along quite well when in early January, 1825, a post rider knocked on his door and handed Morse a letter. The painter was aghast when he read that his wife was desperately ill.

As Morse read the note, he knew the message was already about 12 days old, and maybe he's too late. Why 12 days old? Because that's how long the horseback ride was from New York City to Washington. In those days the Post Office hired lone riders to deliver letters and parcels. They would travel on desolate roads under treacherous conditions to make their deliveries. Sometimes in an emergency, special riders would be hired at a post house to expedite messages to individuals. Such was the case for Morse's post rider.

Morse immediately abandoned his painting, packed his saddle bags and headed north to his wife, Lucretia. When he arrived, some 25 days after the message was written, he was devastated to learn that his wife had passed and was buried while he was en route.

Heartbroken, he certainly thought, "If I could have only gotten the message sooner, I could have been there for her and comforted her." So, because of his painful circumstances in February, 1825, Samuel Morse decided to dedicate himself to finding a better and faster way to send messages than by horseback post rider.

Morse was a Yale graduate who majored in philosophy and math, and while in college, supported himself through his art, doing portraits and commissions. Electricity was a new phenomenon at the time, and Morse heard many lectures on electricity. So, the

artist was able to use what he had learned in college and morphed into a scientist and inventor who changed the world of communication forever.

While painting abroad near the Louvre Museum and at home, he worked many years developing the telegraph and code. Finally in 1832, he was granted a patent. However, due to technical obstacles, electromagnetic signals would not travel far by wire. He worked with other electric pioneers and eventually found a solution. He petitioned Congress to appropriate \$30,000 to construct a 38 mile experimental telegraph line from Washington to Baltimore, and on April 1, 1845, Morse sent the first telegraph message "What hath God Wrought" from the Washington Post Office to the one in Baltimore. Communication was forever changed.

Today, he is more famous for his inventions than for his paintings. However, he was a superb and accomplished painter who studied with contemporary masters in England, France and America.



His painting shown here, *The Gallery of the Louvre* (ca. 1892) measures approximately 12' by 22' and contains 40 miniature copies of masterpieces on display at the Louvre at the time as well as eight portraits of his friends and family. He depicts his deceased wife at the table on the right, and his self portrait is in the middle depicting him leaning on the chair of his daughter.

Morse never completed the portrait of the Marquis de Lafayette. The nearly finished portrait was last sold at Sotheby's Auction in 2005 for the sum of \$1,360,000.

Palm Aire
Communities Council

Newsletter

Spring 2020

Palm Aire Communities Council, Inc.
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