



God Bless Our Troops.

Courtenay Notes

of the North Merritt Island Homeowners Association, Inc.



Issue No. 229

Serving the North Merritt Island Community since 1986

February 2006

CRG Recommendations for N. Tropical Trail Area

By Simone Spiess, Chairperson NTT CRG

"The Citizen Resource Group (CRG) for the Northern part of North Tropical Trail (from Porcher Road along North Tropical Trail to the bend to SR-3) has completed its recommendations.

The report has been under review by Brevard County staff since our November 14 meeting. The agreed upon December 5 response date was missed by several departments. We were not given a new due date. Eventually, the report with all the staff comments, will be posted on the BrevardCounty.us website. Then the CRG will present the recommendations to the Board of Commissioners at a public hearing, scheduled every other Tuesday in Viera.

The CRG held nine monthly meetings with considerable participation by residents. Representatives from Brevard County and other services presented their plans and answered questions from the residents and the CRG members.

A thorough study was prepared to determine the current density (105 residences), the build-out at current zoning (371 residences), and the potential density using the Future Land Use map (662 residences). A survey was mailed to all 134 property owners in the study area and 34 were returned. The data was very helpful, especially the extensive comments. Five residents wrote detailed letters about their specific concerns.

The job of the CRG was to review the Future Land Use map and to make a recommendation for changes. After considering all input, it is clear that the residents do not want to see an increase in density. Thus, the CRG recommends that the Future Land Use map, which would allow 662 residences, be replaced with the current zoning density map. The current zoning map is predominantly one unit per 2.5 acres with a number of one unit per acre parcels north of West Crisafulli and along Church Road. The large parcel of 120 acres north of Treasure Lagoon Subdivision and north of Porcher Road would change to one unit per 2.5 acres.

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Future Meetings



Monday, February 6, 7:00 p.m.

Speaker: Michael Myjak, President of Save Brevard, Inc. to discuss growth management petitions for November ballot.

Monday, March 6, 7:00 p.m.

Speaker: FPL Representative to discuss substation for North M. I. (no confirmation at this writing)

St. Luke's Meeting Hall, 5555 N. Tropical Trail
All meetings are open.

Growth Management to be Discussed at February Meeting

Michael Myjak, President of Save Brevard, Inc. will be the featured guest speaker at the February meeting of this Association. Myjak will discuss and answer questions on two growth management petitions that are being circulated to have them placed on the ballot this November. The petitions would amend the County's Home Rule Charter. They are:

Petition 1: Preserve Quality of Life by Managing the Issuance of New Building Permits.

Petition 2: Right to Vote on Voluntary Annexation.

Save Brevard motto: "Plan for the Brevard we want, or accept the Brevard we get."

More info at www.SaveBrevard.US.

New Development on Chase Hammock

By: Mary Hillberg, President, NMIHOA

The North Merritt Island Homeowners Association was born in 1986 from residents' desire to protect their environment, property values and quality of life. Many times collective efforts result in significant positive communication between our elected County officials and residents of North Merritt Island. One of these results occurred on December 1, 2005, at a Brevard County Commissioners meeting. It is an interesting story that began a year ago and is still unfolding today.

The subject was a proposed rezoning for a housing development on the north side of Chase Hammock Road, between the communities of Otter Trace and Chase Hammock Lakes. The owners of the property (described in Section 25, Township 23 South, Range 36 East) applied for a rezoning of the property from AU to RR-1. The owners wished to develop this 40.5 acre parcel with 31 homes.

The Board of County Commissioners heard and denied this rezoning request on February 3, 2005. The reasons for denial included environmental and drainage issues, (wetlands/hydric soils present), school capacity issues (affected schools did not have capacity available), and density issues (questionable compatibility with Administrative Policies 3, 4 & 5 of the Future Land Use Element), as well as quality of life issues and the desire for a rural community voiced by many NMI residents. A number of NMI residents addressed the Board requesting denial of this item.

(Continued on Page 2)

Zoning Issue

The following was tabled from Oct. 6 to Nov. 3 and now is scheduled to be heard by the County Commissioners on Thurs., Feb. 2, 5:30 p.m. at Viera.

V.B. 29. (NMI50702) GEORGE A. & BARBARA H. OGLE - (Cliff Singleton) request a change of classification from AU to RR-1 on property described in Section 27, Township 23, Range 36, (21 acres). Located on the northeast corner of N. Tropical Tr. and Church Rd.

Celia Williams, this Association's zoning representative said "I plan on being at the Feb

2nd meeting and I think that it is imperative that we have as many residents there as possible to represent the true feelings of the neighborhood regarding this density increase. The Ogle item was tabled to wait on the CRG study findings. The CRG study indicated that the density should not increase. Unfortunately, the final CRG review cannot be presented to the Commissioners until County staff offices have completed their review. This is taking longer than planned."

Citizens Emergency Response Team

David McCoy, President of the Merritt Island Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT) was guest speaker at this Association's January meeting.

CERTs are made up of residents who have received training and volunteer to assist with emergency services. There are currently 80 residents on the Merritt Island team. Training sessions require about 20 hours to complete. For information contact Nancy Smith, 321 637-4072, or David McCoy, 321 454-3970.



Mary Hillberg

Letter from the President

*Hi Everyone,
We have all been graced with another year to change the things we can and accept the things we cannot. Fortunately, there are more of the former than the latter when it comes to our North Island Home. Among the resolutions we may make that have the potential for protecting our chosen environment is becoming part of the solution in terms of quality of lifestyle issues, density, development and growth management.*

We are at a clear crossroads for our voices to be heard by those elected to represent us. Let's speak with one voice and remind everyone that our NMIHOA Mission is to protect the interests of the property owners who reside on North Merritt Island (North of the Barge Canal up to the Kennedy Space Center) with particular emphasis on controlled and well-managed growth, lifestyle of the residents, ecology, area appearance, and property values.

The Vision of the Association is a preservation of the rural character of the North Merritt Island area for the enjoyment this quality of life offers to current residents and that of future generations. The Association envisions the quiet rural environment, clean air, pine forests, oak hammocks, irreplaceable wetlands and wildlife that are the trademark of North Merritt Island to be valued and protected.

At our February 6, 2006 meeting we may discuss solutions to some of these issues. Everyone is invited to come and learn what we can do to design the home environment we want for our families and future generations.

See you there!

Mary E. Hillberg
President, NMIHOA

Chase Hammock Development..... (continued from page 1)

After subsequent changes in ownership/developers of the property, a new request for rezoning was submitted to the Board of County Commissioners on December 1, 2005. The above reasons for previous denial had not changed; however, the inadequate surface/storm water drainage for this area has become grossly apparent since the last storm season, that residents fear property damage, loss of value and even safety issues if corrections are not made – even without new construction adding to the runoff. Residents of Otter Trace attended the meeting and voiced their extreme concern to the Commissioners.

This time, the majority of the Commissioners agreed that an adequate storm water drainage system must be installed and functioning properly, prior to any new development construction beginning, in order to protect the current and future residents of this area. The owners/developers were understandably displeased with a delay in construction, but the majority of the Commissioners stood firm. Our District 2 Commissioner assured the Board that a plan for this corrective system was already prepared, funding was secured and this project would be completed in a timely fashion. Considering this information, the Board unanimously approved this rezoning request with the stipulation that such infrastructure would be in place and functioning properly prior to building commencement. Residents of Otter Trace, who have great concern regarding this issue, are monitoring the property for compliance.

The Commission felt a functioning and adequate surface/storm water drainage system protecting the current residents was a prerequisite for construction in this area. We agree. This decision suggests that while some new growth may be on the horizon for our unique and environmentally sensitive rural community, our elected officials have acknowledged their constituents' concerns and may not allow new construction to negatively impact the property values, the established character and the quality of life for the current residents of North Merritt Island.

We elect our County Commissioners to make informed, fair and balanced judgments in order to protect our current and future residents from the unintended consequences of growth and development. We depend on the voice of the people to ensure an open dialogue is maintained between our elected officials and their constituents. To quote a great lady, Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

This issue of Courtenay Notes has been mailed to all 3375 residential and business addresses courtesy of the NMIHOA. To be informed monthly use form to the left. Revenue is used for printing and postage.

North Merritt Island Homeowners Assn., Inc. 2005-2006 Board Members

Officers

- President, Mary Hillberg, 453-0220
- Vice President, Jack Ratterman, 452-9989
- Secretary, Rose Plummer, 455-6635
- Treasurer, Carol Bragg, 459-2731
- Sgt. at Arms, Ron Penn, 452-5592

District Representatives

- Dist. 1, Kevin Zari, 432-1959 (Barge Canal on both sides of Courtenay to Hall Rd.)
- Dist. 2, Barry & Jeanne Hoy, 449-9519 (W. Hall Rd. to and including W. Crisafulli Rd. and W. side of Courtenay)
- Dist. 3, Dick Finn, 454-9181 (E. Hall Rd. to and including E. Crisafulli and E. side of Courtenay)
- Dist. 4, Chris Cook, 453-7022 (N. of Crisafulli to KSC)

At Large Board Members

- Publicity: Darleen Hunt, 452-8433
- Zoning: Celia Williams, 453-5452

Committee Chairs:

- Beautification: Mary Trettel, 452-8138
- Hike and Bike Trails: Jack Ratterman, 452-9989
- Newsletter mailings: Debra Dannels, 453-5341, and Simone Spiess, 453-6662
- Membership: Carol Bragg, 459-2731 and Simone Spiess, 453-6662

Courtenay Notes:

Editor, Darleen Hunt, 452-8433, DHunt125@aol.com. Published monthly for residents of North Merritt Island from the Barge Canal to the Kennedy Space Center. Deadline for input is first Monday of the month during the Association monthly meeting. Past editions can be viewed at the Merritt Island Library, Reference Department.

Web Site: www.nmihoa.org

Membership Year - July 1 through June 30

Mail \$10 per individual to:

North Merritt Island Homeowners, Assn., Inc.,
P.O.Box 542372, Merritt Island, FL 32954-2372

Name(s): _____ PLEASE PRINT

Residential Address: _____

Address if different from residence: _____

Phone: (home) _____ (work) _____

E-Mail: _____

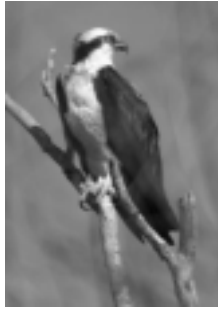
- New member Renewal
- I own a residence and reside on Merritt Island north of the Barge Canal.
- Associate member. Amount enclosed: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Feedback: Please feel free to give us your comments. If you would like to serve on a committee, or have some talent to offer, we would really like to know about it.

Wildlife Sightings on North M.I.

Residents continue to share information about the wildlife sightings they encounter on N.M.I. Painted buntings are a favorite this time of the year. Sharon Burridge was excited to share these photos taken from her second story balcony.



Photos by: Sharon Earl Burridge. Top, Osprey. Bottom, Red Shouldered Hawk eating a frog.



Pine Island Conservation Area and Kabboord Sanctuary Update



The following information was provided by Dr. Scott Taylor, PHD, Central Regional Land Manager, Environmentally Endangered Land Program (EEL), which includes the 900-acre Pine Island Conservation Area (PICA) and the 480-acre Kabboord Sanctuary on North Merritt Island.

He can be reached at taylor@brevardparks.com, or 255-4466.

"At PICA, work on the marsh restoration project has been in full swing, since the rains have stopped and the water level in the Indian River Lagoon has come down.

We are now clearing Brazilian pepper on the spoil deposits south of the Sams Creek Canal. Once the brush piles are burned, we can begin work on the 20 acres of spoil in this area.

The EEL Program completed a prescribed fire at the Kabboord Wildlife Sanctuary. About 15 acres of scrub just south of the Savannahs and immediately adjoining the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge was burned. This area had previously been 'chopped' with machinery to reduce the height of the vegetation and keep the fire within safe limits. The burn was very successful and the habitat in this area should be improved for scrub jays and gopher tortoises."

CRG Recommendations.....(continued from page 1)

Following is a brief summary of CRG recommendations in support of the change of the Future Land Use map to the current zoning density map. Unfortunately, we should not expect the complete text of the recommendation on the website until early February, due to staff shortages in the Planning Department which has given other projects higher priority.

1. Brevard County shall take permanent action to alleviate flooding in the study area. Specifically:
 - a. Funded storm water management in coordination with the Natural Resource Management Office and St. Johns Water Management District.
 - b. Flooding along West Crisafulli Road, Church Road and Porcher Road.
 - c. Cleanup of outfalls under State Route 3 at Chase Hammock and West Crisafulli.
2. Any new installation of sewer lines shall be accompanied by simultaneous installation of reclaimed water lines.
3. Development of the 110 acre Parcel (Part of Parcel 255) north of Treasure Lagoon Subdivision along the west side of North Tropical Trail will be required to use sewer connections.
4. Encourage retention of existing and creation of additional parks and recreational sites within the study area.
5. Encourage retention and maintenance of historical sites within the study area.
6. Monitor progress of the Florida Inland Navigation District development of the silt site with updates given to District 2 Commission Office and the North Merritt Island Advisory Board.
7. Review by the North Merritt Island Advisory Board of all future subdivision applications prior to the 'pre-application' meeting.
8. Repair, maintenance, and improvement of the four roads in the study area that have been damaged by flooding, potholes, and deteriorating shoulders. Specifically:
 - a. Flooding and visibility concerns at intersection Porcher and North Tropical Trail.
 - b. Flooding at West Crisafulli and Church Road.
 - c. Redesign the intersection at Church and SR-3 so that traffic can turn north and south from all directions.

In addition, the Metropolitan Planning Office (MPO) uses 15,500 daily trips for North Tropical Trail, which is totally unrealistic. The MPO needs to establish acceptable levels of service for our roads.

9. To limit further increases in density, the Open Space Ordinance would be excluded from use in the study area. The Open Space Ordinance allows smaller lot sizes and clustered infrastructure. The reduced infrastructure plus the density bonus can allow up to fifty percent greater density than conventional development. The residents have been very clear that no increases in density are desired and thus it is recommended that the Open Space Ordinance not be used in the study area.

At this time, there is no schedule available from the Planning Department for completion of the report with the feedback from the other County Departments. Specifically, there has been no response from the Traffic Department or from the Stormwater Management Department. Until these responses have been received, there will be no schedule for presentation of the report to the Board of County Commissioners.

It is disappointing and very frustrating that the time and effort that residents and the CRG put into our recommendations is wasted until the County staff can work on it at some undetermined time in the future."

Editors Note: This Citizens Resource Group was established by Commissioner Pritchard, who appointed the following residents: Denise Christopher, Bud Crisafulli, Darleen Hunt, Simone Spiess, Jerry Stewart, and alternate Goeoge Ogle. Commissioner Pritchard said he plans to appoint CRGs to study three other sections of North Merritt Island in the future.

Welcome New Member



The North Merritt Island Homeowners Association welcomes Jack Spinks as a new member.

And, welcome to Nathan Michael Zari, born to District 1 representative, Kevin and Serenella Zari on December 20.

Please take the time to check out our Website at: www.nmihoa.org
Current information is added to the bulletin board regularly to keep residents informed of events, changes, and new information that occur between printings of *Courtenay Notes*.