



FEDERATION
OF
MANATEE COUNTY
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS, INC.

FEBRUARY 2019 NEWSLETTER

Next Meeting – February 19, 2019 at 6:45 PM

LOCATION – First Baptist Church of Bradenton
1306 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton, Florida
(Corner of 14th Street & Manatee Avenue)

Meeting Room – Church Offices Building, enter using west back door

Please mark your calendar and attend with a friend to show support
for your community and quality of life.

AGENDA

- **GUEST SPEAKER** – Matt Bower, a Former Planning Commission Member and Candidate for the County Commission
- Reports and requests for assistance by homeowners and items of interest
- Reading of January 2019 Minutes and Treasurer's Report
- Update on BOCC Workshop
- Discussion on our May Outing

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - THE EROSION OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC TRUST

Recent events continue to shed suspicion and misgivings upon our leaders in public and private sectors. Mismanagement, illegal use of funds, social missteps and controversial appointees, continues to be the top headlines for the media. The events of recent date, are wearing thin on our citizens mental and physical well-being. We continue to be concerned about the products we utilize every day, and having enough disposable income to maintain our quality of life.

What then must be done to rebuild the public's trust in these areas of high profile? Companies, corporations, civic organizations, religious groups, and political parties are all being profiled by the media to show more concern over control, power, and profits than they are about meeting objectives for the common good of the consuming public. This behavior causes continued skepticism and mistrust of our decision makers, private public and political. This is not a sustainable path for our collective future growth and raises the question of who is watching and controlling these actions?

So, what are things that we as individuals can do? Being aware of the issues and the actions of the people involved in the process is a must (educate yourself), then adjust your actions accordingly (vote, purchase goods, talk to others). With today's technology, and almost instantaneous publication, there is power to the people unlike ever before. Write your local

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**"Eternal Vigilance
is the price
of Liberty."**

newspapers opinion polls, send out an e-mail, publish a Blog, join a social media site and relate your position. The “power of the pen” is still a very real “weapon of mass communications.”

This process albeit slow, deliberate and painful, it is powerful and can bring about the needed change in our economic sustainable future.

It is the intent of our FMCCA family to reach the responsible parties to make them aware of our positions and actions, let them then respond accordingly.

It is important for us to have information from our members to help guide our efforts. Please mark the dates of our meetings and attend. We can make a difference. What will your actions be?

Thoughts to Ponder: I have been reading a series of books by Ginny Dye following a philosophy called the Bregdan Chronicles, a historical fiction novel series. Ms. Dye’s series emphasis the following called the Bregdan Principle:

“Every life that has been lived until today is a part of the woven braid of life.”

“It takes every person’s story to create history.”

“Your life will help determine the course of history.”

“You may think you don’t have much of an impact. You do.”

“Every action you take will reflect in someone else’s life.

Someone else’s decisions.

Someone else’s future. Both good and bad.”

50 YEARS OF FEDERATION EXPERIENCE IS WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD...

The Federation has been in existence for 50+ years serving community associations, and home and condo owners. After tallying subjects from people who contacted us, there are many important issues at stake which residents have major concerns about. People are now demanding their voices be heard and request to be involved in the decision-making process through citizen committee and board establishments. Residents now desire to be included when changes are taking place in their “backyard,” local shopping plaza, their “homeland,” and want to be involved in growth development decisions.

To name some of the general issues and problems residents are upset and calling the Federation for help with involve over-development and too much growth, lack of road, street, bridge, and school infrastructure to accommodate growth development, and amendments to the county Comprehensive Plan, the Land Development Code to favor developers, and zoning and ordinance changes favoring business. The biggest issue is bottle-necked transportation thorough ways and lack of new roads when new subdivisions and developments are approved. High on the list is overcrowded bridges to cross Manatee River and lack of access roads to get to and from our islands. All of these topics have had a negative impact on our way of life.

Only by acting as a “**unified body**” can we hope to have the necessary influence to protect our county’s beauty, its shoreline, protect our property values, and seek building new roads. We must work together to protect the pristine undeveloped areas of our beautiful Manatee County from development. All Manatee County residents have come to relish and enjoy life on the Gulf and desire to keep our County’s beauty as it is for our use and future generations to enjoy. We invite individuals and community homeowner/condo associations to contact us and join the Federation and help support our efforts. (KLD)

BOCC PUBLIC HEARING WORKSHOP ON NEW COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

On February 5, 2019, I represented the Federation at a public hearing before the Manatee County Commission (BOCC), along with FMCCA Director Diana Adams, who was representing her family and her neighbors.

Diana spent many hours reading and documenting 600 pages of the new proposed County Land Development Code. She pointed out where the proposed code is unclear, lacking sufficient public notice, and is inadequate to properly protect residents and their property, including her own neighborhood, when developers seek approval of their developments. She also pointed out where too much discretion has been left in the hands of staff to approve developments, waive requirements without the public's knowledge and consent, and bypassing public hearings before the BOCC, especially in redeveloping along the Urban Corridor.

I provided "police powers" information to the BOCC and staff. This power prohibits and penalizes the county if they approve new developments, or redevelop areas of the county, in violation of adjacent property owners' rights of procedural due process. Property owners can apply police power rights to have their health, welfare, safety, and privacy protected by the BOCC.

It was pointed out to the BOCC that a recent Florida Second District Court of Appeals case was upheld by the Florida Supreme Court. The decision upheld the rights and duties of the County Commission of Pinellas County to protect the people and allow the Commission to deny a request by a developer to rezone their property contrary to objections and appropriate facts presented by the public and adjoining property owners.

Fortunately, Manatee County Commission has scheduled two more public hearings to correct any defects pointed out by the Federation to approve this new code and to better protect the public in the future. (ESM)

URBAN CORRIDOR OVERVIEW

Are you aware that the Urban Corridor is **not** just a revitalization label, and the Land Development Code is **not** just a general updating of the code?

The Urban Corridor is the area encompassing the properties that abut the following roadway corridors within Manatee County's Urban Service Area which include:

- Manatee Avenue West (from 75th Street West to 34th Street West)
- Cortez Road West/44th Avenue East (from 75th Street West to 15th Street East)
- 53rd Avenue West/SR-70 (from 75th Street West to US 301)
- Tamiami Trail (US 41)/14th Street West (BUS 41) (from 26th Avenue West to University Boulevard)
- 15th Street East (from US 301 to University Boulevard)
- 1st Street (from 21st Avenue West to Cortez Road West)

The Urban Corridor design is based on an Orlando example which pushes the buildings to the fronts of the streets with parking located either in the rear of the building or in parking garages.

Changes in the Urban Corridor in Manatee County could bring the fronts of the buildings 10 feet to no more than 20 feet from the street, buildings that are 5-7 stories high with 32-36 dwelling units per acre, that could be built anywhere from 10 feet (15 feet with an alley) to 100 feet from their adjacent neighbors.

The Manatee County Land Development Code includes important changes in many areas including the Urban Corridor. These changes include incorporating a mixed use of buildings including residency. The goal is to increase the "density, intensity, and height of buildings" along the corridor using "incentives" and "bonuses". Also encouraged is the "redevelopment of underutilized properties" and the "integration of adjacent properties along the Urban Corridor". In addition, the code states that "if existing streets are vacated to allow the aggregation of smaller blocks into mega-blocks", alternative vehicular connections shall be provided.

Residents living along the corridor appear to have insufficient opportunity for input in the process. Residents will only have input during the rezoning process, unless additional changes are made. Unfortunately, the Department Director has total approval of these redevelopments along the corridor without Commissioner or public input in the process.

You should become aware of your property rights concerning this important change. One way to help yourself would be to call, write or email your County Commissioners. If you would like more information, please contact the Federation at www.thefmcca.com and members will guide you to the supporting documents. (DA)

HAB UPDATE

The Federation has received a copy of a requested legal opinion, from the County Attorney to the BOCC, confirming that the concerns of FMCCA were correct. Certain Manatee County funds, collected from our taxpayers, cannot be used to pay emergency health care for non-U.S. citizens. Under Federal law, any LIP (Low Income Pool) funds, subsidized annually with Manatee County funds, cannot be paid out locally for non-U.S. citizens' emergency health care.

Last year Manatee County sent approximately \$3.6 million dollars to the State of Florida in order to receive matching \$3.6 million dollars from the Federal Government for a total of approximately \$7 million dollars, which was then sent to local health care providers to use and not to Manatee County.

The Federation will continue to follow up on tracking whether or not these funds are being provided locally and disbursed properly. (ESM)

DID YOU KNOW?

This article was written with citizen involvement and community action in mind. Ask questions, offer solutions, contact County Commissioners or School Board members, and support your neighbors -- even when the problem isn't in your neighborhood. Create change! (DA)

Did You Know:

- Manatee County Commissioners and staff must now adhere to the landmark case: Pinellas County v Richman Group of Florida Inc. in all future planning issues.
- By 2045 the predicted population of Manatee County will exceed 500,000.
- Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department offer free educational programs to groups in exchange for community service work.
- We have over 800 homeless students in Manatee County.
- There are 3 Tidewell Hospice houses which are available to anyone in Manatee County.

2019 MEETING DATES AND SPEAKERS

You do not need to be a member to attend our meetings. All home and condo owners are welcome guests. To be a part of the solution, not the problem, you can join the FMCCA. The meetings are free. Bring your ideas and questions to our next meeting. We look forward to your participation.

January 15 – Robin DiSabatino
February 19 – Matt Bower
March 19 – Mayor Shirley Grover Bryant
April 16 – Commissioner Misty Servia

May 15 – Robinson Preserve Tour
September 17 - TBA
October 15 – TBA
November 19 - TBA