

The POA BULLETIN

The Property Owners' Association of The
Villages

Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975

December 2003

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Paradise Center Re-Build -- Option is Being Considered

The effort to build a new Paradise Center continues to gain support. General reaction from residents is favorable. The POA has a group of members working to spread the word and contact various groups and activities which now meet in the Paradise Center. If we contact you or your group, please help us with this review effort.

The VCCDD has authorized \$20,000 for an engineering and architectural review of the Paradise Center. This will assess the problems that might be encountered if the auditorium building were to be saved and separated from the other buildings on the south side. This review should be completed sometime during fiscal year 2004.

We have been told by the District Administrator that the full demolish and rebuild alternative is not likely to be the recommendation favored by the staff. However, the District Administrator also told us that nobody's mind has yet been made up and any of the alternatives mentioned are up for consideration.

We have told the VCCDD and the District Administrator that the demolish and rebuild alternative is thus far favored as the best alternative as compared to any of

the renovation and redecorate alternatives. Especially since this demolish and rebuild alternative has an estimated cost of only \$1.97 per household per month as an increase in the monthly amenity fee.

Thus, it is VERY IMPORTANT for all readers of the POA Bulletin to voice their opinion on the Special Questionnaire on page 3 of this Bulletin. This questionnaire offers all residents the opportunity to comment on what should be done with the Paradise Center. Please take a minute to review the questionnaire, fill it out, and return it to us by mail. Please only complete one questionnaire per person.

The cost estimate of \$1.97 per month is based on an estimated demolish and rebuild cost of \$5 million. The assumption is that bonds with a face value of \$5 million are issued to pay this cost. The bonds are amortized over 20 years at a rate of 7.0%. This cost would be spread over roughly 20,000 households in The Villages during the building period. These calculations yield a monthly cost per household of \$1.97. This could be handled as an increase in the monthly amenity fee.

This set of assumptions is thought to be conservative. The cost estimate of \$5 million compares to a cost estimate for the Savannah Center of roughly \$3 million. The 20 year amortization period could be 25 years. The 7% interest rate could be 5% in today's interest rate climate. Thus, all assumptions considered together are thought to be conservative.

The yearly cost to the VCCDD in total would amount to \$472,000, or about one-third of the budgeted \$1.4 million per year earmarked for Landscaping Services and Flowers. In this light, the cost of the demolish and rebuild alternative appears modest and affordable.

The POA will report progress to its membership at monthly meetings. All interested residents are invited to come to these meetings to hear the latest developments. Monthly updates will also appear in the POA Bulletin.

If you, the reader, have any thoughts about how this Paradise Center project should be handled, please voice your opinion and fill out the questionnaire on page 3. You can't assume that someone else will do it and that you don't need to get involved. It is vitally important that as many residents as possible voice their opinion. This is your community and you need to speak up for what you think is best.

Important Paradise Center Questionnaire

We need the help of all residents interested in what happens to the Paradise Center. The questionnaire below will help us understand what all Village residents want on this important question. It is very important that we understand your thoughts on this issue. Please complete the questionnaire below and return it by mail as soon as possible to:

The POA
BOX 1657
Lady Lake, FL 32158.

Please only complete one questionnaire. The POA will tabulate the results and present summaries at both the POA monthly meetings and in future issues of the POA Bulletin. Residents are welcome at POA membership meetings to discuss results. Thanks for your help.

1. In a typical month, how many times are you in the Paradise Center? Please check one:

- Never 1 - 3 times a month
 3 - 6 times a month Over 6 times a month

2. Have you seen the new Chatham Center? If yes, please compare it to the Paradise Center in terms of features, quality, and visual appeal. Please check one of the following:

- I have not seen the Chatham Center and cannot compare it to the Paradise Center
 The Paradise Center is better than the Chatham Center
 The Paradise Center and the Chatham Center are comparable
 The Paradise Center does not compare favorably to the Chatham Center
 The Paradise Center is a serious disappointment compared to the Chatham Center

3. Within the past year, have you seen any of the following in any areas of the Paradise Center? Please check as many as are true in your experience:

- Yes, I have seen Termite Damage
 Yes, I have seen Mold or Mildew Problems
 Yes, I have seen Discolored Ceiling Panels or Walls due to Leaky Roofs
 Yes, I have seen Dripping Rain Water inside due to Leaky Roofs
 Yes, I have seen Peeling Paint on the Walls
 Yes, I have seen Defective Floors or Carpeting

4. Within the past year have you seen a rat in or around the Paradise Center? Please check as many as are true in your experience:

- No, I have not seen a rat at the Paradise Center within the past year
 Yes, I have seen a rat in the auditorium building
 Yes, I have seen a rat in the pool area
 Yes, I have seen a rat in the buildings on the South side of the Paradise Cent
 Yes, I have seen a rat outside but close to the building

5. To address the problems with the Paradise Center, which of the following do you favor? Please check one:

- Demolish the entire Paradise Center and Completely Rebuild it
 Renovate and Redecorate everything, but do not demolish any buildings
 Keep the Auditorium Building, but demolish and rebuild the other buildings
 Demolish and Rebuild the Auditorium Building, but keep and renovate the other

buildings

6. Do you think that a new, showcase Paradise Center would have any effect on property values on the East side of The Villages? Please check one:

- Yes, property values would be affected positively
- No, there would be no effect on property values

7. The Cost to Demolish and Completely Rebuild the Paradise Center has been estimated at \$1.97 per month per household. Would you be willing to have your monthly amenity fee increased by \$1.97 per month to pay for a new Paradise Center? Please check one:

- Yes, I would be willing to pay the \$1.97 per month
- No, I would not want to spend money on this

8. Would you be willing to donate to a Legal Action Fund to hire an attorney, if needed, to help advance these ideas? Please check one:

- Yes, I would be willing to donate whatever I can, if needed
- No, I don't think it would be worthwhile to donate money for this

9. Would you be willing, if needed, to come to a VCCDD meeting to demonstrate for these ideas? Meetings are held at the VCCDD offices close to Highway 466, West of Buena Vista Blvd, on the last Friday of each month, at 9 a.m. However, please wait for an announcement from the POA as to whether or when we need to meet and demonstrate. Please check one:

- Yes, just let me know and I will be there
- I am not able to make the trip, but I support the idea
- No, this would not be a good idea.

10. Would you be willing, if needed, to join a picket line in front of the Sales Office on the Square to demonstrate for these ideas? However, please wait for an announcement from the POA as to whether or when we might need you to join a picket line. Please check one:

- Yes, just let me know when and I will be there
- I am not able to do that, but I support the idea
- No, this would not be a good idea

11. Where do you live? Please check one:

- Lake County, East of 27/441
- Lake County, West of 27/441
- Sumter County
- Marion County

CDD #1 Supervisor Distorts Important Issue For Residents

Betty Ruth Leech seems to have put her foot into her mouth again. In the previous POA Bulletin, it was reported that Ms. Leech withheld important information about a CDD #1 meeting when she wrote the minutes for that meeting to be published in the VHA newspaper.

She withheld information that the supervisors in a year-end meeting voted themselves a pay increase for attending meetings. The increase was to \$200 per meeting from \$100 per meeting. Also, the pay was extended to include other special meetings attended by supervisors.

In total, the CDD #1 expense for supervisor pay could run as high as \$24,000 in the 2004 fiscal year.

The supervisor vote was unusual in that it came after the budget was finalized. CDD officials usually say that the budget is set in concrete late in the previous fiscal year and cannot be changed. However, these supervisors used a special budget amendment to override the normal budget process. This neatly enabled their dip into CDD #1's cookie jar for the money.

And, Ms. Leech facilitated all of this by withholding the important information from residents in her minutes published in the VHA newspaper. Ms. Leech said it was not important enough to report.

Now, Ms. Leech has attempted to distort another important issue in The Villages. In a Letter to the Editor in the October 30, 2003, issue of the Reporter, a resident mentioned that "... the Villages administrator should be elected, not appointed. ...for the residents to have no say in how they are governed seems rather dictatorial. And, from what I have heard, the incumbent fits the mold perfectly."

This letter was clearly referring to Mr. Pete Wahl, District Administrator of The Villages, and the way that the VCCDD administers the governmental affairs of The Villages. Ms. Leech picked up on these comments in the next issue of the Reporter with her own Letter to the Editor.

She said: "Our community is definitely not a dictatorship. Each area of The Villages is in a Community Development District ... (with) ...five elected individuals from the district to answer to the residents."

Ms. Leech comments were about the "residential" CDDs, not about the "commercial" CDD known as the VCCDD which was the government unit referred to in the resident's original Letter to the Editor.

It is the five VCCDD supervisors who make all of the big money decisions in The Villages with little if any input from the residents.

And, the supervisors are effectively appointed by the developer with no input from the residents. Residents cannot elect or vote for the supervisors in the VCCDD.

And, the district administrator is effectively appointed by the supervisors/developer with no input from the residents. Because of this, the District Administrator has little or no incentive to be responsive to the needs and interest of residents. This sounds like a dictatorship to us.

Thus, it is the VCCDD and Mr. Wahl that seem "like a dictatorship," as mentioned in the original Letter to the Editor.

Ms. Leech tried to switch the discussion to the residential CDDs. In doing this, she distorted the issue about dictatorial rule in The Villages coming from the commercial VCCDD.

She should have known better. She is either naive, confused, or has displayed an amazing lack of understanding about these issues.

Ms. Leech's distortions are not compatible with her role as a supervisor in CDD #1. Neither is her withholding information from residents on the pay issue. Residents deserve a higher level of integrity and honesty from its supervisors.

The POA again calls for Ms. Leech to resign as a supervisor on the CDD #1 board.

Tom Poss Elected FSHL House Speaker

Tom Poss, former president of the POA, has been elected Speaker of the House of the Florida Silver Hair Legislature (FSHL). Congratulations to Speaker Poss – this is quite an honor and recognizes Tom’s contributions to the FSHL over the past years as chairman of the FSHL’s Area 3.

The FSHL has also carried forward the POA-sponsored Community Development District (CDD) reform bill originally passed in the 2001 FSHL session in Tallahassee. This bill calls for the following as revisions to the Florida State Chapter 190 law that governs CDDs:

- Popular election of CDD supervisors,
- Popular election of the CDD District Administrator,
- Application of Florida state conflict-of-interest regulations to advisors and consultants to CDDs,
- Residents approval of any CDD purchases of common property or debt assumptions,
- Use of the “comparable properties” appraisal method for CDD common property purchases.

The POA is working closely with Tom Poss and the FSHL to advance this priority bill. Contact Tom at 750-5640 for additional information, questions, or FSHL membership details.

Cheers and Jeers

Cheers - To Pete Wahl, the District Administrator, for his explanation of all the details of the current property tax bills for all three counties. Thanks – that was a very good use of the Pete’s Place column.

Cheers - To CDD #3 supervisors for deciding that they did not need compensation for serving as supervisors on this CDD board. Maybe the spirit of volunteerism and civic service is alive and well. Perhaps CDD #1 and CDD #2 supervisors could learn something from this.

Jeers - To Sumter county supervisor Jim Roberts for torpedoing the idea of Sumter county building a library in the northeast end of the county close to The Villages. Roberts should remember that about 50% of county taxes come from this area – yet he has essentially vetoed the idea of providing this traditional county service for our area. Roberts has unwittingly advanced the idea of “One Sumter” better than any advertising campaign could have done. Incidentally, the Daily Sun reported that Robert’s hometown of Bushnell has a new library facility. Roberts surely knows how to feather his own nest.

Cheers - To the Daily Sun for its great coverage of the Senior Games here in The Villages. Especially its great color photographs.

Jeers - To the Daily Sun for its poor coverage of the November VCCDD meeting. It only reported on about 10% of the substance of that meeting. Missing was the entire debate on the issue of replacing the Paradise Center. Villagers deserve better than this censored news reporting by the Sun. The Sun should also have reprinted the Paradise Center questionnaire presented at that meeting as a community service to all

POA Elections

The annual POA elections for officers and directors was held at the November general membership meeting. The POA membership elects these positions rather than having these positions appointed by the board of directors as is the case with the VHA. Joe Gorman was re-elected President for his third term. Mary Paulsboe was re-elected Secretary, also for her third term.. Bill Garner was newly elected as Treasurer. There was no candidate for the Vice President position.

Re-elected as directors were incumbents Jim Creek, Pete Cacioppo, Dorothy Cheshire, and Bill Snyder. Newly elected as a director was Jeanne Regnier.

Please join in congratulating these POA officials for their election and decision to volunteer their time and effort in support of your POA.

We Need Your Help

The POA board needs volunteer help from the membership in the following areas: A knowledgeable computer person to act as the webmaster for the planned POA website. Our website set-up person will teach you to manage the website as webmaster.

An attorney to advise the board on a variety of matters. Previous experience in the areas of contracts, real estate law, and corporate law would be helpful, but not essential.

Call Joe Gorman at 259-0999 for details.

POA Holiday Party

The POA's annual Holiday Party is scheduled for the next general meeting on Wednesday, December 17th. We need to know if you are planning to attend. If you haven't already signed up, please contact either: Dorothy Cheshire at 753-5567, Lynn Sciacca at 750-0064, or Sadie Woollard at 753-0615. Bring a dish and enjoy good neighborhood fellowship with other POA members. A good time will be had by all!!

Villages ID Cards Needed at POA Meetings

The entertainment division is starting to check for Villages ID cards at a variety of Village activities. For now, the check is only preliminary to see how many users of any facility carry their cards. The issue is more pertinent in some facilities like the swimming pools, the tennis courts, Boccie courts, etc., where non-Village residents have been found using the facilities in the past.

At a future point in time, residents without their Village ID cards may be asked to leave a facility or activity. So, the message is clear – start carrying your Villages ID cards.

Membership Renewals

Now is the time to renew your 2004 membership in the POA. The 2004 membership form is shown on the back page. If you renew by mail and enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope, your 2004 membership card will be returned by mail. Thanks for your support of your POA.

April Fools Day Revisited (Don't Believe Any Of This)

In an unusual burst of Holiday goodwill, the VCCDD has decided to forego the previously announced increase in the monthly amenity fee. In commenting on this, the VCCDD said: "The POA was right in that the increase was unjustified. So, we will just do without it." For more Holiday goodwill, the developer promised to make up any shortfall in the budget caused by this confusion over the amenity fee increase.

THIS'N THAT!

December 17, 2003

THE NEXT POA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Third Wednesday of the Month – 7:00 p.m.

Main Auditorium – Paradise Recreation Center

Investiture of POA Officers and Directors

The POA President's Annual Report

The POA Holiday Party

A Holiday Feast For All

The Last Meeting of the Year

ALL RESIDENTS WELCOME – COME AND JOIN US

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