

KEY NOTES

NEWS FROM
THE PERDIDO KEY ASSOCIATION



[April 2017 Key Notes](#)

News from the Perdido Key Association

Perdido Key Issues

[Escambia County Sector Plan Opt Out Approved](#)

On March 16, 2017, the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners passed two measures of possible significance to Perdido Key property owners and residents. The essential issue was a request for an opt out from the Escambia County Optional Sector Plan, a land use document for 15,000 acres of the northern Rt. 29 corridor (north of I-10, west of Rt. 29, and south of Rt. 196) that established a number of districts designated for greater development (Town Centers) while leaving other areas available for residential development and greater environmental protection (such as Conservation Neighborhoods).

The first measure established criteria for opt outs from a sector plan while the second was the request to change the zoning on an 8.67 acre parcel of land from Conservation Neighborhood to allow commercial development. Debate on both measures was lengthy, with the requestor (former County Commissioner Wilson Robertson) effectively represented by legal counsel Jesse Rigby and the many citizens in attendance who opposed the request well represented by resident Jacqueline Rogers.

Commissioners Jeff Bergosh, Grover Robertson and Steven Barry spoke in favor of the measure, citing issues such as fairness and the provisional nature of the Sector Plan when approved, while District 2 Commissioner Doug Underhill expressed his concern for the precedent being set if the opt-out was approved. He noted that approval would be the first time in the State of Florida that an opt out from a Sector Plan was granted and that the Perdido Key Master Plan could be subject to similar opt out requests. In the end, four of the five Commissioners voted for the measures with Commissioner Underhill dissenting.

In a follow-on article in The Pulse, Commissioner Underhill stated that "Someone needs to defend the lifestyle of the citizens as strongly as we seem to want to defend the desire of the developers to make more money." (The Pulse March 17, 2017 article "Former Escambia

Commissioner's Property Exempt from Land Use Plan"
at <http://pulsegulfcoast.com/2017/03/former-escambia-commissioners-property-exempted-land-use-plan>).

Lionfish Removal Day

Lionfish are a colorful but venomous invasive species that have been consuming native species in the northern Gulf of Mexico. The Third Annual Lionfish Removal and Awareness Day is scheduled for May 20-21, 2017 in downtown Pensacola at the Plaza de Luna Park on South Palafox Street. It is an opportunity to find out more about the problem and also what a lionfish tastes like! Volunteers are also needed to help with a variety of tasks at the event, from providing information and running a raffle to preparing the lionfish for cooking. If interested, please contact Rick O'Connor, Escambia County Sea Grant Extension Agent, at [850 475-5230](tel:8504755230) or roc1@ufl.edu. For more information on the event, go to <http://reefrangers.com/event-info/>.

Gulf Power Rate Increase

Gulf Power has reached tentative agreement with the Florida Office of Public Counsel (representing ratepayers) on a \$54.3 million annual revenue increase. This would lead to a likely consumer rate increase from 11 cents to 11.6 cents per kilowatt hr. The company argues that the revenue increase is needed "to support current infrastructure investment." This is less than the \$106.8 originally requested and includes only a small increase in the base charge on monthly service, much less that the original request which - it was argued - would hurt low-income consumers. The agreement must still be approved by the Florida Public Service Commission. For more on the issue, see Pensacola News Journal March 20, 2017 article by Joseph Baucum "Gulf Power Reaches Tentative Rate Increase Agreement" at <http://www.pnj.com/story/money/business/2017/03/20/gulf-power-rate-increase-settlement-psc-florida-bill-base-charge-georgia-plant/99409492/>.

Representative Gaetz Pushes for Navarre Pass

A cut was made through Santa Rosa Island at Navarre Beach in 1959 to allow boating access to the Gulf from Santa Rosa Sound. But, according to a March 22, 2017 article in the Pensacola News Journal, the pass was almost immediately closed by a hurricane and has remained blocked to boaters ever since. Congressman Matt Gaetz is pushing to reopen the pass with federal legislation that would also change land leasing arrangements on the island. Superintendent Dan Brown of the Gulf Islands National Seashore has stated, however, that "reopening of the pass and overturning the lease fee system could change the character of the fragile barrier island by disrupting the ecosystem, furthering beach erosion and fueling larger-scale commercial development." For more on the issue, see Melissa Nelson Gabriel article "Reopening Navarre Pass, beach leases on Gaetz's agenda" at <http://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/navarre/2017/03/22/navarre-pass-beach-leases-matt-gaetz/99452222/>.

Ciclovia Open Streets in Pensacola

Saturday March 25, 2017 from 9 AM to 2 PM saw downtown Pensacola streets devoid of vehicular traffic, but alive with pedestrians, cyclists, and all sorts of other non-motorized

transportation. It was the first ever Ciclovía event in Pensacola, following a worldwide movement by over 400 cities to devote certain days for allowing people to move around town without cars or trucks. Skateboards, traditional and recumbent bicycles, large and small tricycles, and even a walking bicycle were all cruising Main and Palafox Streets. From the size of the crowd and participation by many families in the event, Ciclovía seemed like a success. For more information, go to <http://pensacolaopenstreets.com/>.

PKA Officers for 2017

The officers of the Perdido Key Association for 2017 are:

President - Charles Krupnick

Vice President - Kelly Robertson

Secretary - Marsh Young

Treasurer - Lee Walthall

April Calendar

April 1 - Ice Flyers at Pensacola Bay Center

April 1, 2 - Cirque Italia at Pensacola Interstate Fairgrounds

April 1, 2 - Northwest Florida Quarter Horse Show, Escambia County Equestrian Center

April 6, 7, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28 - Blue Wahoos at Blue Wahoo Stadium

April 7 - 85th Anniversary of Bellingrath Gardens and Home in Theodore

April 8, 9 - Okaloosa RevFest of music and art in Fort Walton Beach

April 14 - Repticon Pensacola Reptile and Exotic Animal Show at Navarre Conference Center

April 15 - Easter Egg Hunt and Kids Fun Day at the Flora Bama

April 16 - EASTER

April 18 - Song Writing Series at The Point Restaurant

April 18 - Author Robert Putnam at Jean & Paul Amos Studio, Pensacola State College

April 19 - Mama Mia at the Saenger Theater in Pensacola

April 21, 22, 23 - Perdido Key Wine and Arts Festival at the Villagio Town Center

April 28 - Under the Stars event for Baldwin County Child Advocacy Center in Fairhope

April 28, 29, 30 - Interstate Mullet Toss and Gulf Coast Greatest Beach Party at the Flora Bama

Blue Angels practice on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, NAS Pensacola

Bands on the Beach every Tuesday, Pensacola Beach

Spring Bird Migration at The Sanctuary on Dauphin Island

The following websites provide additional information about events taking place in our great Gulf Coast region:

<https://www.visitpensacola.com/>

<http://mygulfcoastchamber.com/>

<http://www.visitperdido.com/>

www.mulletwrapper.com

www.myescambia.com

<http://www.emeraldcoastfl.com/>

<http://alabama.travel/festivals-and-events>

<http://www.cityofmobile.org/calendar/>

Regards,

Perdido Key Association Board of Directors