

Ocean Park Echo

Welcome to...

OPCL

Ocean Park Civic League - Virginia Beach, VA

Meeting

Thursday

November 4

7:30 p.m.

Ocean Park

Fire & Rescue

PHP purchased by Wells Fargo at auction

Editor's note: On Oct. 22, Wells Fargo purchased PHP. This article ran Oct. 21 and provides information on the next steps for saving the property.

By [Deirdre Fernandes](#)
The Virginian-Pilot
© October 21, 2010

Wells Fargo Bank is auctioning off 120 acres of environmentally-sensitive land owned by development firm L.M. Sandler & Sons Inc. today.



The auction, part of the foreclosure process, doesn't alter the bank's plan to sell the land to conservation groups and the city for preservation, said Kristy Marshall, a spokeswoman for Wells Fargo. "In order for us to get possession of the property, it needed to go into foreclosure," Marshall said. "It's just a formality, and we can now move forward with our plans." She said she expects the bank to be the sole bidder.

The Trust for Public Land, a national organization, in partnership with the city of Virginia Beach and other environmental groups, has struck a tentative deal with Wells Fargo to buy the property for \$13 million.

The trust, city officials and groups like the Chesapeake Bay Foundation want to prevent the property - which boasts oyster beds, wetlands and a maritime forest - from falling into a developer's hands again. Sandler had plans to build Indigo Dunes, a development of more than 1,000 homes, on the property before the firm fell into financial problems.

Continued on page 5



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By Rick Mercadante

OPCL President



Dear Ocean Park Neighbors,

What a beautiful fall we're having. This is my favorite time of the year. It's been a busy few months since our last newsletter. As some of you already know, a small group of folks have been very active in trying to help the City of Virginia Beach purchase the Pleasure House Point property. They ran a very successful rally on Marlin Bay drive at the beginning of October, as well as several fundraisers at local restaurants. It's a long, uphill battle, but they are fighting a courageous fight. We all have our fingers crossed that their efforts will be successful.

Most of you know that earlier this year the owner of Don Julio's restaurant applied to have the restrictions lifted on their ABC License. OPCL took a position in opposition to this application. At the September general membership meeting our members voted to approach the owner with a compromise position, which was accepted. Starting this month, Don Julio's will be able to remain open until 2:00 am on Friday nights (Saturday morning), on Monday nights during NFL football season, and on New Year's eve and Cinco de Mayo. They can have live, non amplified, acoustic music until 10 p.m. (indoors only), and they can now have games. I know that not everyone will be happy with these new, less restrictive rules, but this is the best outcome to this situation that we could expect.

Lastly, as some of you already know, after this upcoming meeting I will be resigning as your president. This unfortunately is not by choice. It seems that the Navy has decided that my services are needed overseas. Apparently there is a shortage of white-haired, creaky-jointed, almost 50-year-old Naval reserve officers in theater, and my presence will tip the balance in our favor. I regret not being able to stick around and finish my term, but you will be in the capable hands of Martin Thomas, our current Vice President.

I have lived in Ocean Park for 21 years, this is, and always will be, my Home. While I'm away, my heart will still be here in Ocean Park. They say that when you're in a stressful situation you should relax and take your mind to a happy place. My happy place is sitting in beach chair on Sylvan Beach, sipping a beer, and enjoying the sand between my toes while hanging with my friends and neighbors. I'll see you all in a year.



Civic League plans donation to Ocean Park Rescue Squad

As of the end of September, the Robbins Legacy account was valued at \$196,500, which is allocated 65% fixed income/cash and 35% equity/balanced funds. The Ocean Park Civic League Finance Committee decided to take the allocation up to the maximum of 40% equity allowed with the purchase of preferred securities in October with matured CD proceeds because of the current low interest rate environment.

This will position the account to continue generating approximately \$6,000/annually in interest and dividends. We expect to make a donation to the Ocean Park Volunteer Rescue Squad to fund operations and have begun to explore participating in an upgrade of the exterior of the OPVRS buildings on Shore Drive.

Your ideas for funding community projects are encouraged and welcome.



Photo by Tim Solanic

Shore Drive Treasure

Ocean Park resident Grace Moran is the author of this Letter to the Editor. It appeared Oct. 1 in The Virginian-Pilot.

Your Sept. 21 editorial, 'A last chance on the Lynnhaven,' summarized perfectly the situation with regard to Pleasure House Point, which many had assumed would be renamed Indigo Dunes.

The city of Virginia Beach, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Trust for Public Land have our boundless gratitude for bringing us this far.

As you so correctly point out, the stumbling blocks we currently face are not insurmountable.

A grassroots effort is forming to raise sufficient funds to acquire the maritime forest that may otherwise be sold for commercial development. Why bother with one 5- to 10-acre parcel? This particular section of the tract is home to the most heavily wooded portion of the whole.

The remainder is sparsely treed in comparison. This forested refuge provides a habitat unique to the property and supports wildlife species that may be lost if compromised.

This affects more than just the residents along Shore Drive. Boaters and fishermen, for whom the nursery and spawning grounds are so important, would benefit from not having the canoe and kayak population crowded in with them at Lynnhaven Boat Launch.

Property owners stand to have property values improve because of the proximity to a refuge. Commuters would not have the increased congestion from commercial development.

We need to hear from parents and grandparents who want to leave a legacy.

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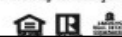
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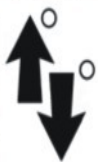
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PHP purchased by Wells Fargo

Continued from Page 1

The coalition has hit obstacles in coming up with the cash to pay Wells Fargo. The city had applied for a \$3 million National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grant, but the federal government last month ranked the preservation project lower on the priority list, decreasing the city's chances of getting full funding.

The city also committed to contributing \$5 million to the purchase of the land. And the trust is still looking to sell a small portion of the land, probably for commercial uses, to help defray the cost of the property.

"At this point, our plan is to carry through with the purchase," said Vice Mayor Louis Jones.

Jones said he is not concerned that a last-minute buyer would come forward at the foreclosure sale and scoop up the property. A developer would need City Council approval to build high-density homes on the property, which is unlikely to happen based on the Beach's commitment to preserve the land, Jones said.

Typically, the bank has been the highest bidder in the foreclosure of other Sandler properties.

Sandler bought the Indigo Dunes land for \$30 million, with a \$19.4 million bank loan.

Wells Fargo also is scheduled today to auction Sandler property at the intersection of South Independence Boulevard and Princess Anne Road. Sandler's plans for the more than 132 acres included some work force housing.

Make Your Point raises money for preserving land

The Shore Drive Community Coalition's fundraiser for the Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation Foundation was Oct. 9.

By Grace Moran

It looks like we took in \$5,887.75 in donations, and Cindy Helmkamp sold an additional \$113 in raffle tickets. Big thanks to Vicky Schiano for procuring so many restaurant gift certificates, for a grand total of \$6,000.75. Contributing restaurants were Beach Bay Café, Cabo Café, Deuce Magee's, Guadalajara and Smoke House Cooler. Shannon Stone of Total Health Massage Therapy and Therapeutic Massage Works furnished a gift certificate valued at \$60. VBSPCA donated two gift baskets for silent auction. Please remember to patronize these generous supporters.

In addition, Lynnhaven River Now donated \$84.60, 15% of T-shirt sales from Saturday. Dominic's of New York donated 10% of food sales. Additional credit and thanks go to Brian Morris, who served as both musician and musician coordinator; Jon Friedman, who designed the promotional poster, mixed the sound, and got some great video/stills. Other musicians who deserve a big thanks include Mike Proffitt, Seth Stainbeck, Pete Hansen, Dahna Rowe, Rachel Hall & Bruce Kittell who play as Solace.

Steve Pahno at Dominion Printers was more than generous in printing of the promotional poster for free and the donation cards and initial flyers for next to nothing. And on time, which takes him to the top of the list of local printers.

About 300 people circulated through the event over a four hour period, enjoying the music, playing corn hole toss and chalking the street. All this in full view of the 5 to 10 acre stand of trees which are currently in jeopardy.



WWW.OPCL.ORG

Check out the Ocean Park Civic League Web site at **www.opcl.org**. The site contains information about important community issues, newsletters, by-laws, budget reports, meeting minutes, and photos. Visit "Recent Posts" for neighborhood news, and check the "Calendar" for upcoming events.

Ocean Park also has a **facebook** site that can be reached under the "Links" entry. Some news items will be published there, but it is primarily for social interaction between members and residents of Ocean Park.

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Move afoot to revise 35 mph limit on Shore Drive

Editor's note: This article ran Oct. 2 in The Virginian-Pilot. It was written by Aaron Applegate.

Momentum is building to partially roll back this summer's speed limit reduction on Shore Drive, an emotional - and increasingly political - issue that has polarized drivers in the busy corridor thick with bars and restaurants along the Chesapeake Bay.

The City Council dropped the speed limit to 35 from 45 mph on a four-mile stretch between Pleasure House and North Great Neck roads in June. That was in response to public outcry after two pedestrians were killed in six months. Ten pedestrians have been killed on Shore Drive in the last eight years.

The change pleased safety advocates and family members of the deceased. But it angered others who said inebriated pedestrians were largely at fault. They called the City Council's actions a knee-jerk response to score political points ahead of the November election.

Now, the two architects of the change are suggesting it may need to be revised, which could include raising the speed limit back to 45 mph on the west side of Lesner Bridge.

"The impression I get is it's probably an effective tool on the eastern side on the bridge, but that it hasn't been that much of a tool on the other side," said Vice Mayor Louis Jones, who represents part of the corridor. "I know there's a sense that the lower speed limit on the east side is appropriate," said Councilman Jim Wood, whose district includes part of Shore Drive.

Any change would likely come around December, officials said.

Jones and Wood called for the speed limit reduction in June. No council members objected. City traffic engineers had said 45 mph was the proper speed. The public response has been split, council members said.

People such as Beach resident Barbara Black, who owns a pet-sitting business on Shore Drive, said the speed limit reduction made the road crowded, didn't take into account pedestrian behavior and wasn't based on engineering. "It should all be 45," she said. "It's a straight road. When you get hit at 35 you are just as dead, but people don't want to hear that. Everybody I know is irate or more than irate about it."

Scott Hulce, whose daughter Whitney was killed in April while trying to cross Shore Drive after leaving a bar, questioned why people would want to raise the speed limit. "Why, besides time? To save a couple of minutes?" he said. "There's no other reason other than people are impatient. You hope it's not one of theirs that's the next victim."

David Williams, who worked with the Shore Drive Community Coalition to push for the lower speed limit, said the road appears to be safer. "It's been very effective at reducing the speed," he said. Speeding tickets have spiked on Shore Drive. In July and August, police handed out 162 speeding tickets, compared with 10 handed out in July and August 2009, according to department records. With November City Council elections approaching, many candidates expressed skepticism about the 35 mph limit.

Candidate Wally Erb, one of seven people running for two at-large seats, said the reduction was illegal because the city didn't do a traffic study first, which he argues is required by state code. City Attorney Mark Stiles disagreed, saying it's not required because state code calls for a speed limit of 35 mph on roads like Shore Drive.

Dave Redmond, a planning commissioner and at-large council candidate, said the reduction should be reconsidered. "My feeling as a driver with the slower speed limit is I feel boxed in. My visibility is less," he said.

At-large incumbents Rita Sweet Bellitto and Bill DeSteph said they're waiting to see a city traffic analysis of the lower speed limit.

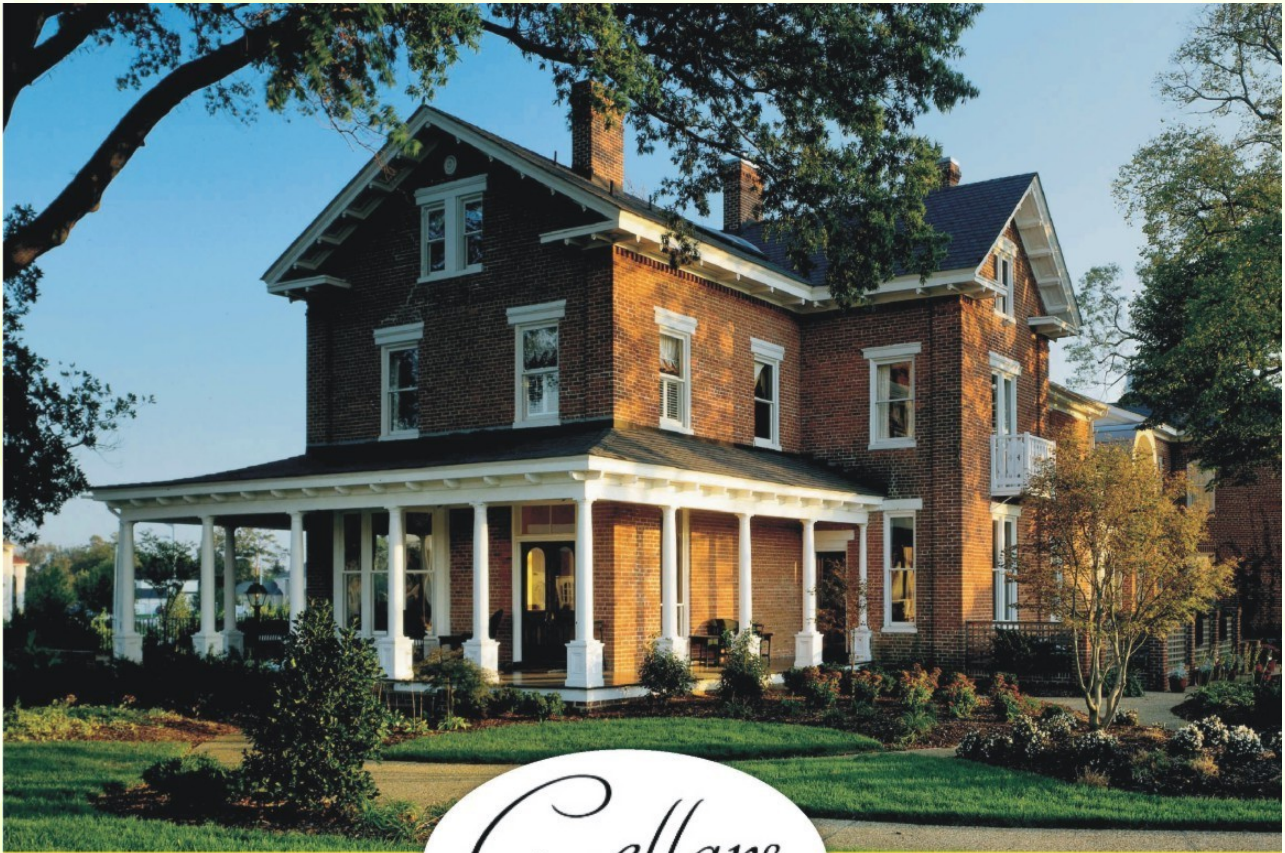
Challenger James Cabiness said the speed limit should stay at 35 for safety reasons.

Candidate Andrew Jackson called the increase a "knee-jerk reaction to pressure from voters" and said it should be re-examined by traffic engineers. Candidate John Moss said he wants to see traffic data about how the speed decrease has worked before taking a stand.

Jones' challenger in the Bayside District, George Furman III, said he doesn't like the 35 mph speed limit.

"It should go back to what it was before," he said. Wood's challenger in the Lynnhaven District, Toni Hedrick, said Shore Drive has become more dangerous since the speed limit was lowered, especially during the day. "There's a lot of tailgating and hand gestures," she said.





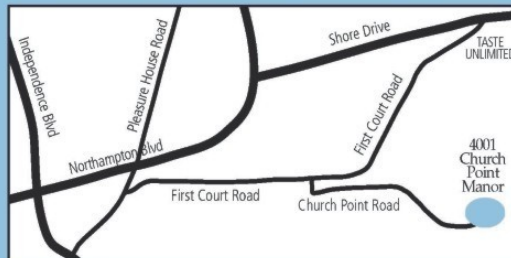
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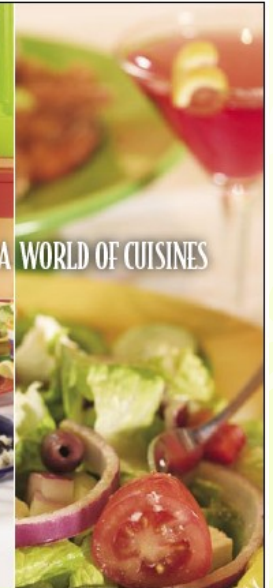
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Ocean Park History Project



These photos show views of Ocean Park over several decades: Old bridge-new bridge, Cold War-era fire station with plane spotting tower barely visible over the “DEP’T”, and YMCA camp plans for the area that Water Oaks now occupies.



Nadine Costenbader chairs the Ocean Park Civic League History Committee. She is collecting photos and documents about the history of the Civic League, and posting the information at opcl.org under Ocean Park History. Suggestions and contributions are welcome.



They call PHP home

Turtle Species known to occur in PHC/PHP

Diamond back terrapin

Loggerhead Sea Turtle

Kemp's Ridley



Least Tern

Mallard

Marsh Wren

[Saltmarsh Wren]

Mourning Dove

Northern Shoveler

Pied-billed Grebe

Red-winged Blackbird



Ring-billed Gull

Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed

Sparrow

Seaside Sparrow

Spotted Sandpiper

Starlings

Willet



Yellow-crowned Night Heron



And, a few of the Avian species

American Black Duck

American Crow [Common Crow]

American Oyster-catcher

American Wigeon

Bald Eagle

Belted Kingfisher

Black Skimmer

Boat-tailed Grackle

Brent Goose [Brant]

Brown Pelican

Bufflehead

Canada Goose

Canvasback

Clapper Rail

Common Egret

Common Snipe



Double-crested Cormorant

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Great Blue Heron

Great Egret

Greater Black-backed Gull

Herring Gull

Hooded Merganser

Killdeer

King Rail

Laughing Gull

Ocean Park History Project

Please visit the website at

[http://web.me.com/nadinecostenbader/
Ocean_Park_History/Welcome.html](http://web.me.com/nadinecostenbader/Ocean_Park_History/Welcome.html)

An active link appears on the
OPCL home page under
Ocean Park History



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