

Ocean Park Echo

Meeting Meeting Meeting

Thursday

March 8

7 p.m.

Ocean Park
&
Fire and Rescue



Next Meeting

May 10

www.opcl.org

This is a critical time for the Ocean Park Civic League

Dear Ocean Park residents and property owners:

This is a critical time for the civic league. Please attend the March 8 meeting. We must vote on several initiatives and must find a way to balance the budget. My priority is membership. Please ask all your neighbors to join. Dues are only \$10 a year.

I am pleased to announce that Mike Wills has agreed to fill the vacant Vice President's position, at least through the end of the year.

Indigo Dunes is heating up again, so please come to the meeting and give us your input.

I cannot overstate that this is the time to step up and become a member of the civic league. We are at an important time in Ocean Park, and we desperately need your input and help. Hope to see you all on March 8th.

Howard Weinberg
President

Bayfront Town Meeting Planned for March 26

The Shore Drive Community Coalition is sponsoring a Town Hall meeting for the Bayfront area on March 26 from 7:30-9:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at Baylake United Methodist Church, 4300 Shore Drive, at the corner of Treasure Island Drive.

Virginia Beach Vice Mayor Louis Jones, Councilman Jim Wood and city staffers will attend. The program will include updates on the proposed Indigo Dunes Project, Shore Drive safety improvement and demonstration projects. Questions also will be taken from the floor on any neighborhood issues.

Local restaurants will provide food and there will be raffles for restaurant gift certificates to Bayfront restaurants. For additional information visit www.sdcc.info.

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Welcome to the Bayfront

New community signs are on the way. Designs have been selected, and six new signs will be placed at the "gateways" to the Bayfront area in the next four to six weeks, reported the Bayside Advisory Committee (BAC) at its February meeting. Smaller signs marking neighborhoods are expected to be developed in the future.

The BAC has met with city officials and identified seven "high priority" areas of encroachment involving city right of ways. The encroachments are considered safety hazards and the city will be asking the property owners/leaseholders to address the concerns: mainly the establishment of well defined entrances/exits; the addition of sidewalks; the removal of non-conforming signage, and improved landscaping.

City staffers informed the BAC of a new development proposal for the property at Marina Shores. If approved, the dry storage facility will be razed as well as the boat dealership and Kokomos to make room for a 332-unit multi-family complex. The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Board will hear the application on Feb. 26. The property also will require rezoning to A36 and needs a conditional use permit.

I asked the committee if they had officially commented on the Indigo Dunes proposal, and they

responded that they felt that the project was still in a state of flux and they would not have any comments until the proposal had been solidified and was before the planning commission.

In other news, the BAC advised that upon Virginia Beach City Council's approval of the \$3.5 million being requested for Shore Drive improvements:

- **\$1 million** would be used to complete sidewalks and improve intersections.
- **\$2.5 million** would be used to complete the design work for Phase II and III of the Shore Drive Demo/Beautification Project, from Marlin Bay Drive to Great Neck Road.

Get ready for the first evening meeting of the BAC on Thursday, March 15, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Great Neck Community Center. This is expected to be the first of three evening meetings to be held each year to interact with more members of the community. BAC meetings normally are held at 3:30 p.m.

The mission of the Bayside Advisory Committee is to serve as a liaison between the Shore Drive community and the Virginia Beach City Council with respect to development and to the Shore Drive Corridor.

- Mike Wills

Indigo Dunes

"You, the community, are making a difference!"

Dear Bayfront Residents,

At 3:47 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 16, a letter was sent from the developer's attorney requesting a deferral of the Monday, Feb. 19, Wetlands Board hearing. The letter states the developer needs additional time to answer questions proposed by several review organizations. Is this the true reason the project is being deferred for a second time and at the last minute?

Are the review clarifications the only reason for the last minute deferral request? Doubtful, the SDCC sent its list of clarifying questions to the developer on Feb 2, 2007. A full two weeks earlier. Plenty of time to ask for a deferral.

Maybe it was the realization that the proposed project violates every code that the Wetlands Board has jurisdiction over? Highly doubtful that the developer will come back with a modified plan that doesn't impact any wetlands.

Maybe it was an attempt to slow down the increasing momentum of community opposition? Quite possible. You did an excellent job of answering the call to arms. Over 100 emails have been sent. Over 5,000 residents have signed petitions both online and in print. Over 50 people were scheduled to attend the hearing on Monday. And over 150 copies of the new "Choice" movie by Chris Groffman have been handed out.

Whatever the real reason for deferral, one thing is certain, YOU, the community, are making a difference.

This project can be defeated.

Maintaining the area as open space as recommended in the Outdoor Plan of 2000. A research facility is still a viable alternative. So keep those emails going. Continue to pass the petitions around. Make phone calls to your friends and ask them to attend the next planned hearing.

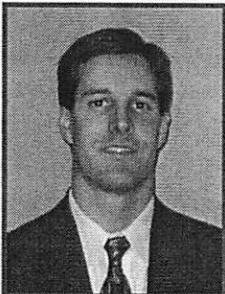
I also wanted to take this opportunity to pass on a special thank you to Liz Dyer for patiently putting up with the hassle of having to cancel the bus at the last minute. Remember to email edyer1@cox.net or call 425-2123 if you want to get on the list for the next trip.

By Todd Solomon

Shore Drive Community Coalition - President

Visit www.sdcc.info for additional information regarding the Bayfront area

Meet Your Neighbors



Mike Wills
Vice President OPCL

"I got involved with the OPCL to help ensure that it would be a positive change"

I am a financial consultant with Wachovia Securities. My wife, Jennie, and I grew up in Chesapeake, graduated from Great Bridge High School and Virginia Tech and moved to Ocean Park in 2000 to get closer to the water and start a family. We have two kids, and you'll find us on the beach all summer.

When we moved to Ocean Park, I knew this neighborhood was starting to undergo a transformation, and so I got involved with the Ocean Park Civic League (OPCL) to help ensure that it would be a positive change as I expected to raise my children here and be a resident for a long time.

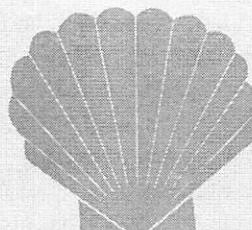
Since I have been a member of the civic league, I have seen OPCL become more connected with city and community leaders. We have established a functioning Zoning Committee that has been active in monitoring redevelopment in Ocean Park and made a positive impact on several projects. There have been many successful social events and hopefully some new annual traditions established like the TGIF beach parties, the Summer-End BBQ, the 4th of July Parade, the Christmas Party and a community yard sale. The OPCL has also put forth much effort in community service events such as a clean-up on Shore Drive and providing care packages for the troops serving overseas.

Civic League to Consider Sale of East Stratford Road Property

Due to complaints concerning the upkeep of a property on East Stratford Road, which is owned by the Ocean Park Civic League, the OP Property Development Committee is exploring the legality and possible sale of the property.

Neighbors who live near the property, located at 3608 E. Stratford Road, have complained about trash in the yard and peeling paint, and there have been problems keeping the property rented. If you have any comments or suggestions concerning the use, upkeep or disposal of the property, please feel to contact a civic league representative.

- By Mike Wills



Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of Ocean Park residents, the 2006 Holiday Care Package Drive for the troops was major success. Through a connection at Little Creek Amphibious Base, we obtained the name and address of Chaplain Steven Brown and on Dec. 23, mailed 22 boxes containing such items as toiletries, paperback books and magazines, games, note cards, pens and pencils, "post-it" notes, non-perishable snack items and more. By Jan. 21, Chaplain Brown had received all the boxes and distributed them to the troops stationed in the remote areas of Afghanistan.

Chaplain Brown reported that the response from our soldiers was enthusiastic, and we even received personal thank-you notes, which can be viewed at www.opcl.org, along with an official Certificate of Appreciation. Bravo Ocean Park.

Care Packages Delivered to Troops

Ocean Park Civic League has opened a dedicated account to accept donations to oppose Indigo Dunes

Mail your donations of checks, money orders or, if you must, cash, to: Ocean Park Civic League, Inc.
P.O. Box 55385
Virginia Beach, VA 23471



Please designate "preservation fund" on your donation. Your privacy is guaranteed. **Donations received to date have varied from \$5 - \$500 per donation. Please join your friends & neighbors by donating.**

Suggested donations are: Yard sign \$5, Oval and strip decals, \$2 and T-shirts, \$15 (currently backordered).

For more information send an e-mail to: SAVEShoreDrive@aol.com

NoIndigoDunes.Com

Join the Civic League Dues are only \$10 per year

We have a core of talented and dedicated residents who give their time to the Ocean Park Civic League, and we could use many more. We need committee chairmen, people to attend community meetings and ideas. We become stronger with each new member.

The first thing you can do to help us is to join. Dues are only \$10 per year per household. Property owners, residents, renters and businesses are eligible to join. Please encourage all your neighbors as well.

For 2007, our priorities are:

1. Increase membership
2. Defeat plan to build Indigo Dunes
3. Ensure future open space at Pleasure House Point
4. Improve safety
5. Beautify Ocean Park
6. Contribute to our community

There are 1,500 households in Ocean Park.
Guess how many residents are paid members
of the Ocean Park Civic League?

128

Join today. Dues are only \$10 per year

OCEAN PARK CIVIC LEAGUE

2007 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

RENT: OWN: YEARS IN OCEAN PARK: _____

AREAS OF INTEREST IN THE OCEAN PARK CIVIC LEAGUE

<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Contributions	<input type="checkbox"/> Shore Drive Committees Liaison	<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Distribution	<input type="checkbox"/> Zoning	<input type="checkbox"/> Social Events Committee

Mail this application with your dues (\$10 annually) to:

Ocean Park Civic League (OPCL)

P.O. Box 55385, Virginia Beach, Va. 23471

Make checks payable to: Ocean Park Civic League

\$\$ Treasury Notes \$\$

It's already March, and I've noticed that most residents of Ocean Park have not yet paid their dues for 2007. Although many are paid through 2007 and beyond, a surprising number have lapsed. If you are uncertain, please contact me. I now have everything on computer and can inform you quickly when your membership expires. My e-mail is OPCL-Treas@cox.net and my phone is 363-7321

The complete details of our current financial standing will be posted on the web-site (www.opcl.org.)

We're exploring the possibility of mailing our newsletter. Since we are tax exempt, we may qualify for special postal rates. However, it would be more expensive than our current hand-delivery system. That may mean that only members receive the news. I wouldn't want to see that happen, so pay your dues and stay informed.

I'm also asking for some more volunteers to deliver the "ECHO." Several reliable people have moved and others are traveling more. Mostly, I need back ups, especially on the South Side.

- By Anne Kane

Zoning Committee Watching BayVista Street Closure and Beach Walkway Request

There have been no variance requests during the months of December, January or February.

The Ocean Park Civic League zoning committee has been keeping an eye on BayVista's street closure and beach walkway request, which have been withdrawn and deferred to the City of Virginia Beach's Beaches and Waterways Advisory Commission.

The Beaches and Waterways Advisory Commission is interested in our community's input on dune encroachments such as private walkways before they make final recommendations to the Virginia Beach City Council. If you would like to express your comments and concerns, please contact Mike Wills.



Escalating Real Estate Taxes Hurt All Of Us

Are you concerned and upset about miserable, unjust residential real estate property taxes and the seemingly never-ending increases?

My wife Margaret and I live at the Chesapeake House. Our real estate taxes have nearly doubled over the past five years. We are not happy!

I felt that we should at least try to do something about the issue. I contacted John Moss and Robert Dean (former councilman) who are active in the Virginia

Beach Taxpayer Alliance. It was suggested that I attend a Saturday breakfast meeting. These meetings are held at Marion Manor (behind St. Gregory's Church, across from Haynes Furniture) on the fourth Saturday of each month. Breakfast (\$3) begins at 8:30 a.m., and the program runs from 9-10 a.m. The March speaker is Councilman Bill DeSteph.

My first time I was more interested to learn about their mission than the guest speaker, who just happened to be Lt. Governor Mark Bolling.

The Alliance is committed to dealing with the size of city government, how they raise revenues, and what they do with these funds. They are working on means to control and/or end some of the reckless spending "insanity." The organization is also acutely aware of the fact that the average Virginia Beach property owner is subsidizing the Oceanfront tourism industry and business district with our tax dollars.

I realize that all civic leagues and homeowners' associations are clamoring

for greater membership and participation, as therein lays the power and influence to achieve results. My point is that although each group has its own agenda, escalating real estate taxes are something that hurt all of us.

The Taxpayer Alliance invites each of you to attend a meeting and learn what you can do. Any questions may be directed to their president, John Moss at 363-7745. I am hoping that we can get more citizens to join and do something about this problem.

Ed and Margaret Kraus

Lights, camera, action

Chris Groffman is hard to reach.

"Can you send me the questions by e-mail?" Groffman asks when reached by cell phone earlier this week. He's in the middle of shooting a film, he explains.

Then he stops to give his crew essentially his friend Matt – some instructions.

Such is the life of an aspiring film-maker.

Groffman, an 18-year-old college student, is in the thick of his latest project – a short film about Pleasure House Point, off Shore Drive.

The swath of sandy beach and marshland near the Chesapeake Bay has received plenty of attention lately.

Developer L.M. Sandler & Sons wants to build more than 1,000 homes on the parcel and is trying to get approval from the city, state and federal government. The neighbors aren't happy about the development proposal.

And neither is Groffman.

"We are trying to show everyone what they are going to lose and to preserve its beauty if it is ever destroyed."

Chris Groffman

Groffman moved to Ocean Park a year ago but discovered Pleasure House Point only recently while driving around Virginia Beach and filming a practice nature video.

"The beauty of the area amazed me," he said.

But don't look for the film in local theaters. Groffman said he plans on posting it on youtube.com, noindigodunes.com and perhaps showing it at local civic group meetings.

Story by Deirdre Fernandes

Reprinted from www.pilotonline.com,
UNDER THE BOARDWALK VIRGINIA BEACH,
Interactive Blogs, Posted 02/09/2007 at 4:25 p.m.

Editor's note: Chris Groffman is 2006 graduate of First Colonial High School and is attending Full Sail, a film school in Florida. Choice will be shown for the first time in public at the Shore Drive CC Town Hall meeting on March xx.

An Ocean Park Cottage: "A Little Slice of Heaven"

By Nadine Isaacs Hook

My father, Howard, and a friend of his built the cottage I live in as a fishing/hunting camp in 1932, and their original sign still hangs on the front of the house. Naming weekend places has always been popular, and so it became the Howdy-Buss Camp with "Pinehaven" carved under the camp name.

Originally the fireplace provided the only heat for the main room, which was paneled with pine, and now after 74 years is the color of mahogany. Some additions were made when my father and mother married and moved in, and more additions came as my brother, John, and I grew up. The kitchen is the size of a postage stamp, and I find it remarkable that as a family of four we actually ate there every day. In one design twist I have never quite understood, the toilet is in a separate room from the bath tub and sink, and guests always find this a bit confusing.

"I feel very fortunate to be able to live in this little slice of heaven."

Cedar shales cover the exterior and need replacement from time to time, but some of them are the original 1932 shingles. The small size of the cottage means that most of the original live oaks are still standing and how they have grown! They provide most of Pinehaven's character. Now the pine trees for which the cottage was named are being succeeded by the longer living and always spreading live oaks. It's the type of cottage that was common in the original Ocean Park, and I feel very fortunate to be able to live in this little slice of heaven.

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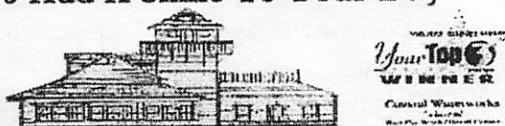
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Poop Pollutes

By Anne Kane, A neighbor and dog owner

The following is taken from the Virginia Beach Municipal Code, and we ask all dog owners to read this carefully and comply with *all* aspects of the law:

Municipal Code

Sec. 5-16 Allowing dogs to urinate or defecate on public or private property.

It shall be unlawful for any owner or person in control of a dog to:

(1) Knowingly or willfully allow his/her dog to urinate or defecate on the private property of other persons without their consent or that of the authorized agent of the one having control of the premises.

(2) Knowingly or willfully allow his/her dog to urinate or defecate on public property, except that defecation by a dog on public property shall not constitute a violation of this section if the owner of the dog immediately removes the material defecated and disposes of it in a safe and sanitary manner. (Ord. No. 1237, 11-16-81)

I have noticed an increased amount of feces throughout the neighborhood and the beach. As a dog owner, I find myself cleaning up after others so that my dog, Molly, will not be blamed for the mess. It doesn't matter if it's July or January, poop pollutes all year long. It is not biodegradable as some people mistakenly believe.

