

North Virginia Beach Civic League News

APRIL 2015

A LETTER FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

SPRING IS HERE, officially, and like the rest of you, I cannot wait to bid this winter farewell and get out and around our neighborhood without bundling up in all the coats in my closet. As I have said many times, it was so cold this winter (that's where you say, How Cold Was It?) that often my dogs almost got stuck to the fire hydrants! What a winter to remember – better yet, forget.

Lots going on in the North End, particularly with the thawing temps. You will perhaps notice our new live oaks have been planted up and down the median flower beds where needed (photo). Special thanks to Jim Spruance for working with the city to get this accomplished. In the very near future, the new bus shelters will appear at 57th and 67th streets, and I think everyone will appreciate their appearance and the service they will offer to all who use the bus system. Again, thanks to Dave Jester,



The goal was to plant trees in the Atlantic median so each block totals five live oaks, both new and established. (photo: Don Naden)

Billy Almond and Jack Drescher for their time and funds. We are investing your contributions back into our neighborhood – spread the word, please.

This month we will be speaking with the city to try to forge a better working relationship to protect our building sand dunes. Efforts are under way to find a compromise between the services that need to access the beach and all of us who favor the dunes growing to further protect us from future storms.

It bears repeating that many neighbors are help and support our great neighborhood. Thanks to those mentioned and thanks to all who help, participate and donate time and money for projects that make our neighborhood better. And please do us all a favor: Spread the word! We need more people to join in the best way they can. Be a member, take in a meeting and get involved in what is important to your street.

Our next meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 21 – as always at the A.R.E. Center, Atlantic at 67th Street. We have two speakers for the evening: Paul Atkinson, CEO of the Eggleston Foundation, will give a quick overview on how their programs offer help to families, some in the North End. Second, Whitney McNamara from the city's Planning Department will preview the proposed signs designed to promote the protection of our sand dunes.

I look forward to welcoming you all to another meeting. Again, thanks for all you do in support of our great area.

See you around the neighborhood,

John Pharr, president, NVBCL



Upcoming civic league general meeting dates

(Tuesdays, 7:30
p.m. at A.R.E.)

April 21

July 21

Guest speakers for April 21

Paul Atkinson,
president and
CEO, Eggleston
Services;
*Whitney
McNamara*,
Virginia Beach
Planning Dept.,
on new dunes
signs for 2015
(see Page 3)

Treasurer's report

Greetings,
neighbors! We
have 584
members, and
our goal this
year is to reach
1,000. (At year-
end 2014, we
had 917, the
most ever.) If
you haven't
already, you can
help by joining
today. Just mail
the enclosed
envelope with
your \$15 dues.
We need you!

As of the end of
March, our total
assets were
\$40,420.



Important numbers

Nonemergency police, 385-5000, option 3

2nd Precinct, 385-2700

Neighborhood Preservation, 385-5750

RESORT PROJECTS UPDATE

■ Pacific Avenue improvements continue from 16th Street north to 23rd. All four lanes of southbound Pacific from 20th Street south are scheduled to reopen May 15. For more information: www.vbgov.com/government/departments/public-works/roadways/Pages/pacific-ave-impvts.aspx

■ Negotiations continued recently between the city and United States Management on building the proposed 18,000-seat arena near the Convention Center on 19th Street. For more information: www.esgco.com/virginia-beach-arena www.yesvirginiabeach.com/resources/arena-information

■ The Peterson Cos. continues to work on its development proposal for the former Dome site. You can learn more at www.petersoncos.com.

■ The Cavalier project continues in design, and the historic hotel continues under renovation while the beachfront hotel is being demolished. The project is reportedly well under way, and a model house is under construction on the northeast corner of the



The first residential construction at the Cavalier on the Hill site is this model house, on Lot 26, photographed in late March. (photo: Don Naden)

property next to Atlantic Avenue (photo). For more information, go online to www.cavalierhotel.com.

Also, this city website offers information on these projects and more: www.vbgov.com/government/departments/sga/projects

– *Billy Almond*

BEAUTIFICATION

SPRING ... SPRING ... SPRING!

That kind of says it all, especially since we can see the fruits of our most recent NVBCL donations to the Atlantic Avenue medians taking root.

The new live oaks were planted last month, but unfortunately some of the previous year's daffodils came up outside the smaller median landscape beds. However, the city's Landscape Department has assured me those beds will be "re-profiled" – enlarged to include the daffodils.

For those of us who live along the feeder road, now is the time to trim and otherwise maintain your landscaping to allow for full public parking off the street pavement. Same for numbered, unimproved (no curbs or gutters) streets – private lawns, shrubs and fences notwithstanding – please keep landscaping trimmed to allow for parking for yourselves, guests and visitors.

– *Jim Spruance*

CITY BUDGET, ASSESSMENTS

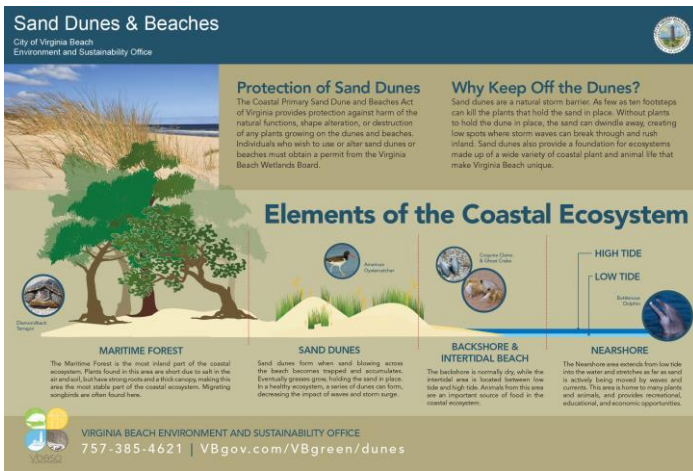
The Virginia Beach Real Estate Assessor has issued his report on assessments for fiscal year 2016. About 62 percent of all properties will receive an increase, and the projected total assessment represents a 2.9 percent increase from FY 2015. The average increase for properties in the "North VA Beach" neighborhood is 4.349 percent.

City Manager James Spore's recently released budget for FY 2016 projects an increase in the real estate tax rate of 6 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

Copies of the assessor's annual reports for FYs 2013-2016 and district reports (neighborhood-specific data) for the same periods are available online at www.vbgov.com/government/departments/real-estate-assessor/Pages/annual-reports.aspx. To explore details of budget expenses and revenues online: <http://budgetexpenditure.vbgov.com>. To read budget documents: VBgov.com/budget.

– *Guy Tower*

City planner Whitney McNamara will show proposed signs such as this one at the NVBCL's April 21 meeting to promote the protection of dunes and their "vital role in a healthy coastal ecosystem."
 (Illustration courtesy of Whitney McNamara)



SHELTERS COMING SOON

Your civic league has been working with the city of Virginia Beach and Hampton Roads Transit on a long-overdue project for anyone traveling to and from the North End using public transportation: bus stop shelters.

HRT bus stops in our neighborhood are now marked with a sign nailed to a utility pole no shelter whatsoever from rain, wind, snow or the hot sun. If you have ever been to the aquarium, you might have noticed a very attractive and well-designed and -constructed shelter (white with a green, metal roof) adjacent to General Booth Boulevard.

Through the tremendous effort of several board members, your civic league has secured two of these attractive shelters at an extraordinarily low cost. We selected what are generally considered the most-used and useful stops in the North End – one at the A.R.E. center (67th-68th streets) and across Atlantic Avenue from the Wyndham Hotel (56th-57th streets). They are scheduled to be installed by sometime in June.

The NVBCL has contributed \$5,827 (\$3,500 already funded by donations) toward the overall \$30,000 cost – HRT donated the shelters (\$24,000) and the city will not only have them installed (at a cost of \$6,000) but has been extremely cooperative in the land-access and paperwork process.

If you would like to assist, we would greatly appreciate any donation to help offset the drain (\$2,327) on our cash reserves used to fund this worthy project.

– NVBCL Board of Directors



photo example courtesy of HRT

ON THE BEACHES

We recently met with all city officials in charge of our beach: head of Public Works, the city's ocean engineer and the head of the Environment and Sustainability office.

Beach Operations has multiple responsibilities regarding the beach: maintaining dunes and bulkheads such that they will protect against a 100-year storm, maintaining the beach for recreation purposes and maintaining access to the beach – the crosswalks. Our dunes are the best of all eight beaches in the city and should protect against a storm in excess of the 100-year category as well as any future sea level rise for the next century.

Growth of the dunes over the years has made access more difficult as sand encroaches on the crosswalks. The city routinely removes excess sand alongside the crosswalks (up to and including the platforms) to facilitate use of the platforms and crosswalks. As the sand has built up, people are reaching the "beach" sooner as sand has covered the seaward end of many crosswalks. This is considered normal maintenance for the priorities listed above.

Occasionally, "dunelets" have started to grow seaward

of the existing dunes. Per our conversation, the city is not opposed to allowing them to grow as long as they are consistent with the priorities above. This became something of an issue when such secondary dunes were removed in January at 77th Street.

Catamarans on the beach sometimes conflict with beach maintenance. Currently, catamarans in the 43rd-44th and 57th-58th streets areas are up against the bulkhead. This prevents Beach Operations from maintaining the sand at a level of 3 feet below the top of the bulkhead. Please reach out to the owners and ask them to move these catamarans. In addition, there are several catamarans buried in the dunes in the 87th-88th streets area. They should be removed by their owners; otherwise the city will remove them. (Note: no catamarans are allowed in the dunes.)

Finally, remember that installation of volleyball posts requires approval from Beach Operations (385-5117) before action is taken.

– Ron Pearson

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