

North Virginia Beach Civic League News

APRIL 2024

A LETTER FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

NORTH END, NVBCL FACE MANY ISSUES

Let us count the ways that your Civic League works to keep our North End neighborhood the way we like it. And we can do it only because we have many people, including residents, willing to step up to help do the work.

By Skip Gibson
NVBCL president



AS I WRITE THIS in mid-March, summer is almost upon us. The weather is improving, the sun is out more often, temperatures are increasing, more people are out walking, jogging, going to the beach, and everyone generally seems happy to be outside. The North End is one of the most desirable areas in the city to live, and it's our residents that make it so special.

Our Civic League has had an interesting several months over the winter on a number of issues, and we have had an active engagement with our membership and our city and state leaders on these issues.

We are fortunate to have many members – such as Andy Cohen, Parker Hannahs and Jack Drescher – who have given freely of their time and energy to make our collective voices heard on the Short-Term Rental (STR) issue. Also, NVBCL directors Billy Almond and Gerrie West have been actively working on the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) issue, not only to maintain the character of the North End but also to provide affordable housing. Due to their commitment, our voices and solutions are being heard!

There are many continuing and new issues facing the NVBCL, including these:

Real Estate Assessments. I have had a number of calls regarding the city's increase in our home values, the potential tax implications and asking, "My taxes have gone up over 30 percent – what is going on?" To address this issue, at our April 17 meeting our guest speaker will be City Real Estate Assessor Sue Cunningham. This meeting will be a perfect opportunity for you to speak directly with her to discuss this issue, and I encourage you to attend.

City Council. We regularly speak with Councilman Worth Remick, who represents the North End, to discuss a multitude of issues ranging from replacement of fencing on select streets, traffic/speeding on Atlantic Avenue through the 83rd Street intersection with Shore Drive and much more. At these meetings, he brings the appropriate city representatives to discuss the issue(s) and find solutions, and much has been accomplished due to his involvement.

Short-Term Rentals and Accessory Dwelling Units. These issues have significant implications for the North End and will be continuing into the next Commonwealth legislative year. The article from Andy and Parker (*story below*) provides a great summary of the issue and what we need to do in the future.

New membership initiative. We are arguably one of the most active, effective and diverse civic leagues in the city. We have a

Please see **PRESIDENT**, Page 4

GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPDATE

Our Civic League protects Virginia Beach's authority to regulate Short-Term Rentals

By Andrew Cohen & Parker Hannahs
Legislative Affairs Committee

Thank you, neighbors! Your support and encouragement on Short-Term Rental (STR) and Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) legislation were a great help during the recently concluded 2024 session of the Virginia General Assembly. We had some success, but we still have work to do!

We also thank Del. Anne Ferrell Tata and Sen. Bill DeSteph for supporting us with their votes in the House of Delegates and Senate.

Our core position on state legislation is to support the authority of Virginia Beach and other localities to regulate STRs and ADUs, so we oppose legislation

that would pre-empt that authority.

Our members unanimously approved this position at our general membership meeting April 17, 2023, and over 500 of you co-signed our letter of the same date about this to the Virginia Housing Commission. Our position on Virginia Beach ordinances for STRs and ADUs is to:

1. Allow STRs only where they are a compatible use, currently only in Sandbridge and the Oceanfront Resort STR Overlay District (*see overlay boundaries on the city's STR web page, linked on the NVBCL's*

Please see **STRs**, Page 3



Upcoming civic league general meeting dates (6:30 p.m., A.R.E.)

April 17, July 17, Oct. 16 – we've changed from Tuesdays to the 3rd Wednesday of the month.

Speakers for our April 17 meeting

City of Virginia Beach Real Estate Assessor **Sue Cunningham** will speak on the city's new real



estate assessments and their property tax implications. Also, police traffic-safety Sergeant Rich

Cheatham will introduce himself and his new role in community relations.



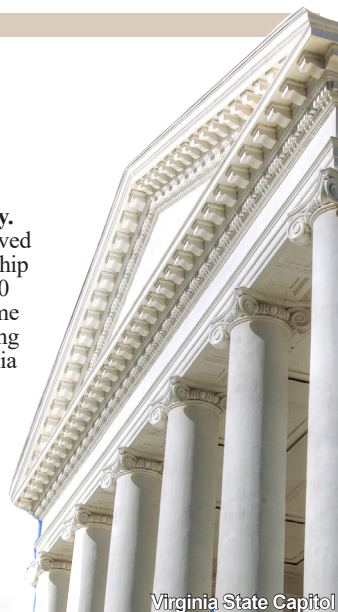
Treasurer's report

Thank you to all members of the civic league who paid their 2023 dues. At year's end, our membership stood at 947, and our assets at the end of March were \$47,515.67.

This newsletter includes envelopes for paying your 2024 member dues. Our annual dues are \$20, for the calendar year. You also can pay through PayPal on the NVBCL website, www.nvbcl.org. Please include your North End address, your primary resident address and your email address.

NVBCL dues have allowed us to support landscaping, bus shelters, the neighborhood welcome signs and several organizations.

– Bonner Styles



Virginia State Capitol



Public safety phone numbers

2nd Precinct Police, (757) 385-2700

Nonemergency police, (757) 385-5000, option 3

Fire/police emergency, 911

BEACHES & RECREATION

Beach burial Whale's final resting place ends up under the dunes in the North End

By David McDaniel
Beaches & Recreation

You might be aware of the beached whale on 24th Street the first weekend in March. Another washed up at False Cape within a few days of that one – both juvenile humpbacks. There have been four others on the Outer Banks in a short period of time. As of this writing, the causes weren't fully determined.

Our city's Beach Operations crew was on the site to secure the area and pull the whale up farther on the beach so the Virginia Aquarium Stranding Team could perform a necropsy. The following day Beach Ops moved the carcass up the beach and buried it in the North End at the base of the dunes. They promptly restored the dunes by planting sea oats, a common practice in our area because there is enough sand depth for the burial and the dunes recover very quickly.

Beach Ops also has been placing keep-off-the-dunes signs in several places along the dunes in the North End. They have placed them on several streets between 61st and 68th, with more to come as summer approaches. As mentioned in our previous newsletter, they are working hard to protect our magnificent dunes.



DON NADEN | NVBCL

Beach Ops also soon will be cleaning the boardwalks to prep for the summer season. March typically brings high winds that blow the sand onto these walkways.

Crews will clean them around the bench areas and down to the sand line, about 4-6 feet on each side of the walkway, trying to keep the sand level with the walkway. They also try to keep the sand level at the base of the walkway, where it reaches the start of the beach. Even though there might be covered walkway below, it makes sense to not dig into the sand just to open a few more feet of walkway. Any sea grass that is removed will be transplanted at the base of the dunes in places where it might be needed. You might see some equipment



▼ This was the humpback that washed up on the 24th Street beach last month. A necropsy was performed, but results were not issued by press time.



DAVID MCDANIEL PHOTOS | NVBCL

A city crew hauled the whale carcass up to the North End, buried it at the base of the dunes and replanted the sea grass.

tracks in some spots caused by this work. The sea grass might not grow for a year or so, but it will grow in these spots after being transplanted. This process has helped expand our dunes over the years.

We might also see some beach raking in April or May, depending on how much sea weed has washed up. This will probably leave some straw piles that will be removed. Around the same time, the trash and blue recycling cans will be moved

back closer to our umbrella camps, and if there are volleyball posts closer than 15 feet or so to the dunes, they could be removed to support dune growth. If you want your posts back, reach out to Beach Ops at (757) 385-5115 – they will be in good hands!

The city has begun another sand replenishment project, similar in process to 2019, when they pumped smooth sand, dredged from offshore, onto the beach. This will start at 16th Street and come up to 42nd, probably beginning in April. This is an Army Corps of Engineers project – Beach Ops is not involved. It might disrupt a few days of your beach time, but it's hard to deny their effectiveness in protecting our beaches.

The days are getting longer, and the summer season is around the corner in Virginia Beach. Time to get out and enjoy the wonderful place in which we live!



MONICA STEIN PHOTO | NVBCL

HOSPITALITY

A new Social venue

By Monica Stein
Hospitality

How nice to get together with neighbors and friends at a neighborhood cafe in the middle of winter!

Driftwood Kitchen, Pacific Avenue at 36th Street, provided an

ideal venue, shared lots of delicious appetizers and the bar was buzzing. Members had a convenient opportunity to pay their 2024 member dues, and we all had a great time.

Stay tuned for details about our next social, probably in June.

We had a good turnout Feb. 21 at Driftwood Kitchen.

Stormwater City keeps drains clear to prevent floods



Working this truck in February to clear storm drains along Atlantic Avenue were longtime city employees Warren Powell and Gregory Sharp.

SKIP GIBSON | NVBCL

By Skip Gibson
NVBCL president

To protect our community from flooding, the city's Public Works Department has a proactive and ongoing stormwater management program.

Stormwater is rain that doesn't soak into the ground. Instead, it flows across our roofs, streets, bare soil and down the street. As it flows, it picks up everything in its path – oil, litter, pesticides, leaves, animal waste and more.

All this stuff then flows, untreated, directly into the closest waterway. Big stuff – trash, leaves, grass clippings – can clog the storm drains and contribute to flooding.

To prevent this, you might have seen city personnel operating pump trucks, such as the one in the photo, clearing storm drains and pipes of any debris that could prevent the flow of water out of North End properties and streets.

On the morning of Feb. 20, the city had four trucks on Atlantic

Avenue, going street to street, manhole to manhole, cleaning/clearing everything to ensure we have great drainage.

The city does this on a regular basis – our tax dollars at work, protecting the North End.

Additionally, the state and city continue to make significant investments in stormwater management facilities. Last year state lawmakers included a \$10 million infusion to construct the 17th Street Regional Stormwater Management Facility, which will be located across from the Virginia Beach Sports Center. The total cost of this facility is estimated at \$18.7 million and is projected to be completed by the end of 2027, according to the city. This facility is designed to remove nutrients, sediment and bacteria from the water before being discharged into the Rudee Inlet Watershed.

To learn more about the stormwater program, Public Works asks you to go online to <https://pw.virginiabeach.gov/stormwater/stormwater-quality>.

48TH STREET PUMP STATION RISES INTO VIEW, STAYS ON SCHEDULE

By Don Naden
Newsletter editor

The 48th Street sanitary pump station building has emerged above ground and is still on schedule for fall completion.

That is according to the project manager, Dawn Ray G. Panaguiton.

"We are still on schedule for completion in November," she said in a March 18 email. "For the most part, the sewer pump station building is now above ground, so we should be seeing the walls come up



DON NADEN | NVBCL

Sanitary pump station construction is still scheduled to be completed by Nov. 20.

in the next month or two. We are still expecting pipeline work and connection by end of Summer."

The project began Aug. 21.

STRs

From the front

STR/ADU web page, at nvbcl.org;

2. Maintain zoning requirements for STRs as are applicable to other residences, including for on-site parking, lot coverage, enclosed square footage, safety, etc.;

3. Support ADUs within zoning limits applicable to the primary home, but with setbacks as applicable to accessory structures;

4. Regulate any use of an ADU as an STR in accordance with ordinances applicable to any other STR;

5. Avoid reducing the number or proportion of homes that are used for long-term occupancy, other than in the STR Overlay District;

6. Require timely, on-site response by STR operators to disturbances or ordinance violations at their properties;

7. Develop timely and effective incentives and penalties for STR operators and their guests to comply with ordinances, and

8. Fund and staff city agencies at levels sufficient to fully monitor and promptly enforce applicable ordinances.

State legislators introduced five bills on STRs and ADUs this year, and as of mid-March two made it to the governor to sign or veto. NVBCL continues to oppose only one of them:

SB 544 would allow STRs "by right" (i.e., no conditional-use permit required) in the primary residence of the property owner.

It would not immediately affect Virginia Beach, which enacted its STR ordinances before the Dec. 31, 2023, deadline in the bill. But NVBCL continues to oppose it because any change to our ordinances would require "re-enacting" them, which could trigger this provision or a lawsuit to resolve this.

HB 1461 would allow a lessee or sub-lessee to operate an STR in a property in which an STR is otherwise allowed. NVBCL withdrew our earlier opposition to this after clarifying amendments were adopted.

Three bills that did not advance this year:

SB 304 and HB 900, nearly identical, would have allowed ADUs "by right" in residential districts. A House committee referred these to the Virginia Housing Commission (VHC) for study, where bills are often sent to die like last year's STR bills did. But House Speaker Don Scott escalated urgency to act on these by directing VHC to respond by July 1, 2024, to recommend legislative action in 2025. Advocates promote ADUs to create more affordable housing. NVBCL does not oppose ADUs, but as for

CITY CREATES NEW STR ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE

In December, Virginia Beach City Council passed a resolution to create a new Short-Term Rental (STR) Enforcement Task Force.

The scope of this task force is to recommend to the council how to improve STR enforcement, registration and compliance. However, that scope does *not* include changes to where STRs are allowed to operate. (The full resolution text is posted on the STR web page online at nvbcl.org)

Thanks to our Council member Worth Remick for proposing and winning council approval to create this task force and appoint NVBCL directors Jack Drescher and Andy Cohen as two of its eight voting members. The other members are Kimberly Denton, Elaine Fekete, Phillip Hines, John Mannino, Aric Martinez and Nancy Parker.

Jack and Andy will share progress updates on the NVBCL's STR web page and in the next NVBCL newsletter, due out in July.

— Andy Cohen

STRs, we oppose the state preempting local authority for zoning of them.

HB 695 would create a statewide registry for STRs. This would not pre-empt local regulation of STRs, but it would require Airbnb and other STR platforms to submit data like STR addresses, rental nights and gross receipts to substantiate taxes that they pay to Virginia Beach and other localities without providing such data. The House Appropriations Committee did not advance this bill due to the nearly \$1 million in costs for changes to state computer systems and intense lobbying by Airbnb.

NVBCL did not oppose this bill, but we initially thought it did not go far enough. City Commissioner of the Revenue Phil Kellam met with us to explain why he and revenue commissioners across Virginia support it, and why the changes that we proposed were not practical or necessary, so we withdrew our earlier exceptions and took no position on this bill.

Again, we appreciate all that you did to support our work on this. We welcome you to contact us with any questions: Parker. hannahs@lfg.com and ACohen@gmail.com. ■

North Virginia Beach Civic League News

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2024 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President	Skip Gibson	(757) 617-2824
Vice President	Stephanie Calliott	(757) 615-6512
Treasurer/Membership	Bonner Styles	(757) 831-3439
Executive Secretary	Linda Palluch	(757) 641-0410
Past President	Gary Sharpe	(757) 544-0885

COMMITTEE CHAIRS (Phone numbers must include 757)

Beaches & Recreation

David McDaniel, (757) 348-3386,

Beautification

Jim Spruance, 646-1225

Budget/Assessments/Taxes

Vacant

Legislative Affairs

Andy Cohen, (703) 855-2184

Parker Hannahs, 274-8973

Hospitality

Monica Stein, 636-0222

Meetings/Publicity/Social Media

Caroline Willcox,

Newsletter

Don Naden, 491-4483

Streets/Utilities/Public Safety

Martin Waranch, 491-3343

Zoning Issues

Billy Almond, 422-9522

AREA DIRECTORS

42nd – 49th	Willy Fluharty	(757) 965-2173
50th – 59th	Mark Chase	(757) 491-1729
60th – 69th	David McDaniel	(757) 348-3386
70th – 79th	Steve Kelley	(757) 450-6019
80th – 89th	Larry Staunton	(757) 428-1514

Find more information on our website, nvbcl.org.

HISTORIC GARDEN WEEK

Tour time Two clubs host their annual private-garden walks April 24

The Garden Club of Virginia's local Historic Garden Week takes place with tours of several North End homes scheduled for Wednesday, April 24 – with morning and afternoon tours.

"This year's trolley-based tour provides access to private properties, most participating in Historic Garden Week for the first time," according to the organizers' website. "Visitors will enjoy verdant gardens, timeless style and thoughtful design. Spend time in a mature oceanfront garden full of na-

tive plants; delight in homes that show how to live with both vibrant style and multiple children; be dazzled by a home designer's labor of love; experience the ultimate beach cottage; and appreciate a painterly garden that reflects an impressive art collection."

The tours are at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and cost \$50 per person (plus



a \$3.30 fee). Buy tickets, online in advance only, at VAGardenWeek.org/tickets until April 23. The above information is listed online at the Garden Club of Virginia.

The Virginia Beach portion of Historic Garden Week is co-sponsored by the Virginia Beach Garden Club and the Princess Anne Garden Club.

— Don Naden

IF YOU GO

What Virginia Historic Garden Week

Where The North End

When Wednesday, April 24

Tour cost \$50 per person

Tickets VAGardenWeek.org

PRESIDENT

From the front

long-standing base membership, but our population continues to grow with new families and individuals moving in. To ensure we're representing our ever-changing residential base, Stephanie Calliott, our vice president, will be initiating a new membership initiative. We want to include as many North End residents as possible to participate in our civic league. Stephanie will have more to say on this in the coming weeks.

NVBCL committees. Do you have an interest in joining one of our Civic League's committees? We would welcome your participation, and almost all of our committee chairs hope to have members participate in a variety of ways. Please email or call the committee chairperson (*the list is at left*), and ask to participate.

2nd Police Precinct Community Action Committee (CAC). I'm pleased to announce that Paul O'Gorman and Mary Souther will be our representatives to the CAC. They will be able to keep us informed about the latest concerns and actions of our Police Department. Many thanks to Paul and Mary for volunteering for this role.

Dune protection. As our primary defense against storms and storm surge, the dunes require our constant protection. The city has re-established the Beaches and Waterways Advisory Commission (I am a member) to identify and propose solutions to many of the issues, such as maintaining the dunes, erosion, encroachment and educational programs. More will be forthcoming on dune protection in the coming months.

Laskin Road project. As most of us know, this highly visible state project continues to be impacted by multiple issues. Ultimately, there will be three lanes westbound and two eastbound – but the state still has much to do. The tentative date for completion is now late 2025. (As a reminder, this is a state project, *not* a city project.)

I look forward to seeing you at either our next general membership meeting, April 17, our next social event sometime in June (date, time and location TBD), participating on one of our committees or simply walking on the beach. ■

BEAUTIFICATION



JIM SPRUANCE | NVBCL

A lovely annual reminder

In the 8100 block of Atlantic Avenue, the Princess Anne Garden Club's efforts some 40 years ago have managed to survive the machinations of various city landscaping re-beddings and re-plantings: These daffodils are a great return on investment!

More recently, the city has replaced and added about 24 new trees to the Atlantic median blocks in the 60s and 70s.

Welcome spring!

— Jim Spruance