

Administrator's Update for 12/25/09

By Roger Baltz

Happy holidays! Regardless of how you choose to celebrate this time of year, my best wishes to all.

Online permitting for 2010

Last week our Building Construction Services (BCS) staff presented an "Ask the Building Department" program on the ACCELA Citizens Access System. This event included an overview and demonstration of registering to use the system, pulling permits on line, scheduling inspections, and conducting permit searches. A question and answer period followed.

A new landscape for 2010 and beyond

The demolition of the Edgewater Building, known locally as the "Beirut Building," has now been completed. This has been accomplished through a collaborative effort between our Building Construction Services department and the County Attorney's office, which brings to conclusion an effort to demolish this building that started many years ago.

At the recent Joint City/County meeting, our Growth Management staff presented an update to the elected officials on the progress of the South County Gateway (City/County Overlay) project. Beginning last September planners from City and County were joined by volunteers from TEAM Punta Gorda to assist with the project. A one-year timeline for the project has been established, as well as targeted areas of concern. Stakeholders meetings will be held in January for the property owners in the affected areas to weigh in with their preferences on the regulation of signage, landscaping and commercial design standards. A draft code is anticipated by summer of 2010.

Last week at the Board of County Commissioners Land Use public hearing, the commissioners voted unanimously in favor of transmittal of the Smart Charlotte 2050 Comprehensive Plan to the Department of Community Affairs for an Objections, Recommendations and Comments report. Our staff efforts focused upon a web-based approach that allowed the public to review the documents online and make comments on the content.

Facilities Update

The redesign contract for the new Human Services Building has been approved. This will be the County's first LEED certified Green Building. There will be a redesign period of approximately 2 months as LEED elements are incorporated into the existing design. Staff has installed motion sensor lights (photo-cell activated) on the perimeter of the Sunrise Park restroom. This will ensure that lighting is used only when the facility is in use.

Public Works Projects

Demolition of the Venice Canal Bridge has begun as part of the Aquí Esta Drive Roadway Improvements Project. The bridge will be closed to vehicles for approximately six months but will remain open to boating traffic. Boaters may experience minor delays during the demolition of the bridge deck.

Initial survey work has begun in conjunction with the design of the Year 1 Sales Tax Sidewalks Project. This project consists of design and construction management for sidewalks funded through the Sales Tax, including sidewalks on Alton Road and Collingswood Boulevard in north county; Florida Street and South Fairway Drive in south county; and Manor Road and Rebel Court/Boundary Boulevard in west county.

Public Safety Activity

Our County Fire/EMS has purchased Med Vaults. The purchase of these Med Vaults was through a State Grant to the County. Installation is anticipated to occur around the first part of the New Year. The system is an electronic vault that holds controlled substances on the Advance Life Support Units. This box is designed to provide an electronic record of each time the medical vault is opened by a Paramedic. Each Paramedic will have their own "PIN" number to the system so anytime they access the vault it is recorded. This system will provide the most secure and accountable way to keep our controlled substances safe.

On Dec. 10, 2009, our Charlotte County Fire/EMS hosted Leadership Charlotte at the Public Safety complex. The Department demonstrated several different incidents that are common to the Department's daily operations. The class ended with a tour of the new Public Safety Complex and all the Departments located within and their functions.