

PINE Archives

February 2001

Page 1

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Land Use Meeting

Over 200 attended the Pine Island Land Use Meeting at the Fishers of Men Lutheran in St. James City. February 6, 2001. Where to build, how much more to build and what to build were



the questions asked . Guest Speaker Bill Spikowski, (pictured left) from Planning Associates, of Fort Myers tried to address these issues to those who attended the Town Hall Meeting. Mr. Spikowski was well equipped with charts and stats

concerning what the Community Planning Committee of the Greater Pine Island Civic Association had proposed to the County.

Also attending the meeting, was County Commissioner; Bob Jane's (photo left) who



was listening to what the residents of Pine Island indicated they wanted for the future of the Island. Some of the important goals were:

To manage futures growth on and around Greater Pine Island so as to maintain the island's unique resources and character and to insure that island residents and visitors have a reasonable opportunity to evacuate when a hurricane strike is imminent.

(Continued on page 5)

Expo 2001 Big Success

The Greater Pine Island Chamber of Commerce held their fourth Business Expo on 1/27. This is an annual event the Chamber sponsors for Business members and non-members on and off island. The Expo is not a fund-raiser. The



Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner and Election

It was a well attended Annual Meeting on January 22nd, at the Sandy Hook Restaurant in Matlacha. Members and guests started arriving around 6:00 PM for social hour and were asked to sign in and



received their ballot for the election of board members, food ticket and name badge. This year the Chamber President, Sally Tapager did something a little differently with the seating assignment. She put a board member at each table to answer any questions and explain what the chamber is doing for the membership. This was received as a positive gesture by most. Prime Rib and Grouper were the two main dishes served with salad and fresh baked bread as always it was a delightful dinner and was enjoyed by all that attend. The chamber had a very full slate with guest speaker



D.T. Munich (photo right), Executive Director for the Lee Island Coast Visitor and Convention Bureau. He spoke about the growth of

(Continued on page 2)

Canal Controversy

With over 200 people in attendance, the back of the hall was standing room only at the First Baptist Church of Pine Island at Pine Island center, February 1, 2001. Most were residents of Tropical Homesites in St. James City. About 25 did not live in the subdivision but were concerned Pine Island Residents. The meeting was called to order by Lee Penoyer (photo left) a



resident who lives in Tropical Homesites with his wife and 5 children.

Chamber of Commerce holds it to promote its members and to recruit new members.
 They had a very steady flow of visitors this year. Around 400 plus attended to see what Pine

(Continued on page 5)

children; he also owns L.P. Construction. Lee thanked the concerned Pine Island residents who helped in handing out flyers and getting the word out about the meeting. He explained to the residents that they had not won the war yet, but they had won the first battle. County Commissioner Bob Janes, several department heads from district #1 and Lee County Mosquito Control met that morning and agreed the first step would be removing the

(Continued on page 2)

[Next Page](#)

[Home](#) [Classified Ads](#) [Area News](#) [Opinion](#) [History](#) [Links](#) [Business Dir](#) [Statistics](#) [Calendar](#) [Palaver](#)

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February 2001

Page 5

**Email
Addresses:**
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Land Use Meeting

(continued from front page)

Mr. Spikowski talked about the explosion of agriculture on the north end of the island, and how this was not anticipated, also residential growth being slower than expected. In 1981, area photos showed some farmland but not palm tree farms. In the last 15 years agriculture has taken over the north end of the island, with very little expected residential construction. There are 33,620 acres on Pine Island with 1/3 in mangroves, forest, slash pines, palmetto with a lot of these being cleared for agricultural. When asked if this 1/3 agricultural property will be divided and built on in the future, Bill replied that, "This is why we are trying to adopt some restriction on building and what can be built". None of the early planning committees on the island kept records or reports, so this is one thing the current Land Use Committee is going to do. "We need records not for us now but for the future of Pine Island".

Major planning was discussed in some detail: Hurricane evacuation, traffic, town and country boundaries, environment and community design of the island. The make up of the island is mangroves along the shoreline, with seagrass just offshore these are very important plants to the aquatic life on and around Pine Island and surrounding

(continued on page 6)

Canal Controversy

(Continued from page 4)

recommended that a sign be placed at the canal explaining what is going on, whom to contact and how they as residents or just visitors can contribute to help keep the canal open.

It was overheard that had the meeting not been held in the church it might have turned into a hockey match.

Send all donation to: SouthTrust Bank c/o Tropical Homesites Canal Trust Fund 10171 Stringfellow Road, St. James City, Florida 33956 or if you have any questions call Lee Penoyer at 941-283-4585 or email:

lpconstr@aol.com

Anyone wanting to addresses this issue or any other issue in the paper may do so by

Expo 2001

(continued from page 1)

Island had to offer to the residents. Expo 2001 had 35 local businesses participate in the event with a wonderful display of their services and products.

There weren't as many visitors this year as last, but we didn't have any complaints from the businesses. Those who did attend asked a lot of questions and the businesses could spend more time explaining their services and products. Karen Steers, an agent at Century 21 #1 Sunbelt Realty said "I had a wonderful time and I met so many good people" They had office supplies, computers and hardware sales, vacation resorts, real estate, beauty products, kitchen aids, newspapers, commercial printing, publications



and advertising, Pine Island Official Pads and greeting cards, financial advisors, Island T-shirts, arts, crafts, and even hardware advise from Home Depot and so much more... Not only could you get a lot of information but you could also purchase items for some of our vendors and a lot of free samples were offered.

The event was held at the Pine Island United Methodist Church located at Pine Island Center across from the Fire Department. Both businesses and visitors said they were extremely happy with the turn out and are expecting a bigger and better year for Expo 2002. Remember, It is a yearly event and if you missed this year watch for next years date on PineIslandNews.com. Special thanks from the Pine Island Chamber of Commerce and the Expo committee to the Matlacha/Pine Island Fire Department for the strong arms who provided invaluable help with the heavy tables that needed to be setup and tore down; also Cindy Krupo from Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, V. Bridges from Payphones, Inc. and Pat Burman from PrintCraft of SW Florida for working so hard on planning Business Expo 2001... and all who donated their time to make Expo 2001 a huge success.

Held the same day was a Health Fair Sponsored by Pine Island United Methodist Church their times correspond with the Expo. Food and drink were



February 2001

Page 6

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Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner and Election

(continued from page 3)

"Hookers" fundraising efforts apparently due to the double entente. However, after the school was presented with the \$8000 check last November, the Lee County Commissioners reversed their position. Upon the recommendation of Principal Thompson, the Lee County School Board will present the Matlacha Hookers with the very prestigious "Round Table" award. Nancy thanked the members of the chamber for all their help and explained she wanted to get more involved in the Chamber and its activities. The Chamber officers indicated they would love to have such an outgoing and gung-ho person involved in its projects.

After the guest speakers, Sally Tapager introduced the acting Board of Directors and all of the Ambassadors, for without whom the chamber doors would not be open. Joan Rosenberg gave a financial report and a MangoMaina financial report and reminded members that only a few years ago the Chamber account had in it only a few dollars. Then Joanne Merritt, Nominating Chairperson explained the ballot. This year five positions became available and four of our Directors chose to stay on the board. Past President and tireless worker Al Mills would not be able to rerun for the board due to moving his business and time pressures. However, Al said he does plan to stay an active member and help with the Business Expo and MangoMania. This left one opening and Betsy Dunn agreed to fill that spot. At this time the nominations were opened to and received from the floor with Hugh Cross from Cross Cruises being nominated and accepted. President, Sally Tapager spoke to the members about the Chamber activities has during for the year. She also explained that the chamber could use more help. "The fifteen board members are all working people and they own and operate one and some own two different businesses and also work very hard for the chamber and chamber functions. With 179 members we should have more help, not leaving it all to the board of directors and ambassador's." We need to get more of our regular membership to attend meetings or stop by and visit the chamber. And give a few hours a week or volunteer to help on fund-raiser's and business functions designed to increase business

Land Use Meeting

(continued from page 5)

areas. Without this, Pine Island's commercial, recreational fishing and other wildlife that depend on the natural growth of some of these plants could be threatened. The removal of these plants would result in the demise of Pine Island wildlife.

Pine Island also has a very important history with the existence of one of the most important sites of the Calusea Indians dating back more than 1,500 years ago.

Pine Island is made up of retirees from up north, young families with children who attend Lee County Schools and families who work either on the island or who use our roads to work off island and many old commercial fishing families.

Traffic is one of the big concerns in Matlacha and there was talk about building another bridge in Matlacha. Bill stated that this is not likely to happen since widening the road would destroy the historic district of Matlacha. There was discussion about a new bridge bypassing Matlacha, starting at Shore Drive and running just south of Matlacha pass coming out just pass Sandy Hook Restaurant. Since 1990 traffic on Pine Island road has increased by 22%. This increase was with little residential growth. The increase was due to tourism, commuting and shopping.

Helping relieve some of the road, traffic problems during 1991-1992, Pine Island Road from Burnt Store to Stringfellow Road (State Road 78) received substantial improvements such as widening, raising its elevation and resurfacing. In addition, Matlacha drainage was improved with new shoulders being installed.

Examples of types of building and improvements on Pine Island that should not impact the roads were Convenience Stores, Grocery Stores, Hardware, Service Stations, Hair Dresses, etc. Since these types of products and services would tend to keep residents from traveling off the island.

Building that will impact the roads, Hotels, Marinas, Tourist attraction, Subdivisions, Condos, Restaurants that hold more than 100 people at a time. Mr. Spikowski and the Land Use Committee stated that they are not anti-growth but they are for controlled growth. "We need to protect the beauty of our island for the future to enjoy. Controlled development can

and to make the chamber more of an asset to its members. The ballots were counted and the winning nominations were announced we are happy to say we had no pregnant ballots, chads or dimples although we're not sure about the members. The elected Board of Directors are as follows; Pat Burman of PrintCraft of S.W. FL and PineIslandNews.com, Betsy Dunn, Licensed Real Estate Agent at Century 21 #1 Sunbelt Realty, Eileen Boren - Licensed Real Estate Broker, Mike Marseglia - Old McGowans, Joan Rosenberg - Island Computers and the remaining board of directors being - V Bridges - PayPhones, Inc., Paul Eckenroad, Nancy Mule-André Photography, Leoma Silberg - Matlacha Art Gallery, J.D. Hollway Waterfront Restaurant and Marina, Joanne Merritt - Office Assistance, Bruce Riso - Pine Island Printing, Sally Tapager - Tropic Star and Jug Creek Cottages, Paula Schuetz - Islands Insurance and Cindy Krupo - Morgan Stanly Dean Witter. This is the Pine Island Chamber of Commerce standing Board of Directors for the year 2001. Stay in touch with pineislandnews.com for all your upcoming Chamber events like MangoMania 2001 and more.

work".

Stay in touch with PineIslandNews.com to upcoming meeting dates. Let us know what you think about what is proposed by Pine Island Community Planning Group. Send email to admin@pineislandnews.com.

[Back](#)

[Next page](#)

[Home](#) [Classified Ads](#) [Area News](#) [Opinion](#) [History](#) [Links](#) [Business Dir](#) [Statistics](#) [Calendar](#) [Palaver](#)

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[Back](#)

[Next page](#)

[Home](#) [Classified Ads](#) [Area News](#) [Opinion](#) [History](#) [Links](#) [Business Dir](#) [Statistics](#) [Calendar](#) [Palaver](#)

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