



EAST TAMPA Redevelopment News

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EAST TAMPA Redevelopment News

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Transforming East Tampa into a vibrant residential and business community with recreational, social, and cultural life.



Community Garden Takes Root



Grab your gardening gloves and join us at the East Tampa Community Garden. Nestled on a tree canopied lot at 1012 E. 28th Avenue, the garden has about 15 "lasagna" plots staked out in various stages from decomposing compost waiting to be planted to growing gardens.

The East Tampa Community Garden started in November 2009 through the efforts of Frances Brooks and Maria Ortiz and the generosity of property owner Brian Becker who made the land available through a two-year lease. Students from the University of South Florida and Earth Force

Partners (an organization whose mission is to engage young people as active citizens to improve the environment and their communities now and in the future) are collaborating and presenting courses to help sustain the garden.

The East Tampa Community Garden emphasizes multi-generational involvement to build community pride, self-sufficiency, and environmental awareness. You can meet up with other gardeners most Saturdays from 10 am to 2 pm. Learn more by visiting the East Tampa Community's Garden's Facebook page where you will pick up gardening tips, community news and more. Call 813-234-5065 or 813-325-7772 or email etcg_2009@yahoo.com for more information.

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influences residents and business owners by focusing on neighborhood investment, improving appearances of gateways and corridors, identifying incentives for projects and private sector development, fostering business growth, and enhancing the area's transportation linkages through cooperation with HART, TBARTA, and the FDOT.

Congratulations to community members, USF and City of Tampa officials, and private sector participants whose determination and vision has helped make both of these prestigious awards possible.

Your Neighborhood Connection

Twelve neighborhood associations in East Tampa are actively working to ensure a safe and vibrant community. Contact your neighborhood leader and get involved today. For more information, contact Cindy Toselli in East Tampa Development at (813) 242-3807 or via email at cindy.toselli@tampagov.net or, contact the neighborhood president directly by email.

College Hill Civic Association
Cynthia Few fbckbeauty3@verizon.net

East Tampa Business & Civic Association
Marc Hamburg flreamarc@aol.com

Eastern Heights Neighborhood Association
Sam Mobley smsam1@verizon.net

Florence Villa/Beasley/Oak Park Civic Association
Barbara McGill bmcgill1@tampabay.rr.com

Grant Park Civic Association and Watch Group
Ralph Johnson Ralphj0103@yahoo.com

Highland Pines Community Task Force
Betty Bell Bellsystem5@verizon.net

Northeast Community Crimewatch & Civic Assoc.
Joel Barnum jbar1952@verizon.net

North View Hills Civic Association
Frank Reddick far9155@aol.com

Old Seminole Heights Neighborhood Association
Shawn Hicks president@oldseminoleheights.org

Southeast Seminole Heights Civic Association
Sherry Genovar-Simmons genovar.simmons@seshca.com

V.M. Ybor Neighborhood Association
Kimberly Headland rkheadland@verizon.net

Woodland Terrace Neighborhood Association
Ruth Fleming 1flemingjr@tampabay.rr.com

East Tampa Big Winner at Community Design Awards

It was an exciting and very special evening on Thursday, April 29th, when East Tampa was chosen for not one, but two community design honors at the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission's 28th Annual Community Design Awards.



L to R: Keith Greminger, Ed Johnson, Denese James, Councilwoman Linda Saul-Sena, Evangeline Best, Carrol Marshall, David Crawley, Michelle VanLoan, Mark Huey & Michael Chen

An Award of Excellence in the Environmental Category was given to the Robert L. Cole Sr. Community Lake. This is the second East Tampa retention pond transformed from an ugly duckling to beautiful swan thanks to the vision of community residents, the USF School of Architecture and Community Design, L.A. Design, Inc., the Florida Center for Community Design + Research, and the East Tampa Development Division. Named for a prominent East Tampa business owner and community activist, the community lake and recreational green space includes a ¼ mile circuit of boardwalks and sidewalks, a two-story belvedere, a covered pier, an exercise station, site furnishings and landscaping. Funded by the East Tampa Tax Increment Fund (TIF), the total project cost was over \$950,000.

The Robert L. Cole, Sr. Community Lake is located at 1798 E. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Blvd. across from Young Middle School. Students there have adopted the lake and will conduct water tests and share results with the community. The revitalization of this pond establishes a new aesthetic precedent for stormwater retention.

The City of Tampa East Tampa Development Office and URS Corporation were given an Award of Merit in the Master Planning category for the East Tampa Strategic Action Plan (S.A.P.) during the Planning Commission ceremonies. In 2004, East Tampa was designated one of the largest Community Redevelopment Areas in the United States. Its 7.5 square miles encompass almost 7% of Tampa's land area, and 9% of the city's population. The S.A.P. is pivotal for setting a predictable course for investment in East Tampa that positively

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From Gray to Great!

Have you noticed, on the south side of the Tampa Police District III on 22nd



Street, a row of unfinished concrete benches and walls? It's a blank slate waiting for artistic transformation which we hope to have happen in the Fall of 2010.

Stay tuned to future issues of this newsletter for details on the transformation of this outdoor area from austere to exciting!

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East Tampa One of Four CRA Recipients of EPA Brownfields Program Grant

A brownfield is a property for which the redevelopment or reuse is difficult due to the presence of petroleum or other hazardous pollutants. Like most cities, Tampa has its share of contaminated sites from previous commercial or industrial uses. Fortunately, in the early 1990s, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) started a Brownfields Program with the express mission of helping communities to “prevent, assess, safely clean-up, and sustainably reuse brownfields.”

In 2009, the EPA awarded the City of Tampa \$400,000 in brownfields assessment grants to be utilized in the East Tampa CRA (and three other CRA districts: Drew Park, Tampa Heights, and Central Park). The grants will fund 26 Phase I and eight Phase II environmental site assessments plus public health monitoring, planning for cleanup, and community outreach.

The four CRA districts have numerous brownfield sites, including 25 of Tampa’s 69 illegal dump sites. According to the EPA’s website, brownfield clean up projects leverage \$18.68 per EPA dollar expended; and 61,023 jobs nationwide. Additionally, stormwater runoff from brownfields redevelopment is 47-62% lower than alternative greenfields scenarios; can increase adjacent residential property by 2-3%; and promotes area-wide planning. The benefits of brownfield clean-up are clear, bringing properties back to productive reuse and improving public health.

For more information on the EPA’s brownfields program visit:
www.epa.gov/brownfields.



Meeting Room at Quality Inn Named in Honor of Betty Bell

John Fitzgerald Kennedy once said, “One person can make a difference and every person should try.” This statement epitomizes the efforts of Betty Bell, president of the Highland Pines Community Task Force.

As you may recall, the derelict Milner Hotel located at a major East Tampa gateway off Interstate 4, had become an eyesore and scene of illegal activities. Betty helped lead the charge for change as a community advocate for the newly renovated Quality Inn & Suites which held its official ribbon cutting in February 2010.

A very surprised Betty was honored when hotel officials revealed a plaque by the meeting room door, naming the room the Betty Bell Meeting Room. Quality Inn & Suites manager, Stephen Svecak said, “Betty was the biggest advocate of the area. Throughout the construction process, her visionary ideas were a tremendous help to the management company.”

The \$18 million renovation of the Quality Inn & Suites is a prime example of East Tampa’s tax increment funding dollars and public/private partnerships at work. Renovation work included gutting the old hotel and enclosing an exterior corridor to provide room access via a central interior corridor. New wiring, plumbing and room build outs with modern conveniences and décor finalized the property. Approximately \$550,000 in local property taxes from East Tampa’s Tax Increment Finance district helped to pay for landscaping, sidewalks, and street widening near the hotel.

Congratulations Betty – on your steadfast and sincere efforts for bettering our East Tampa community. For more information about scheduling the meeting room or to stay at the hotel, call 813-623-6000 or www.qualityinn.com/hotel/fla63.



22ND Street Spruce Up

Two local shopping centers have had a makeover. Check out the Suncoast Center at the northeast corner of North 22nd Street and 26th Avenue. The bright yellow façade trimmed in blue paint is grabbing attention for the businesses housed there – Fatboy’s Beauty Supply, Suncoast Grocery, and Hong Kong Chinese Restaurant.



A little further down 22nd Street at the northwest corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard directly behind the Hope Gas Station, is the upgraded façade for the Aliana Meat Market and 22nd Street Gyros.

We commend these establishments for their efforts in improving the appearance of their buildings and contributing to East Tampa’s ongoing renewal.

Flavorful Favorites – East Tampa Eateries

When it comes to great dining options, look no further than East Tampa! We are highlighting mouth-watering restaurants recommended by East Tampa Community Advisory Committee members.

Molbert Scrivens likes **Ella’s Americana Folk Art Café** on Nebraska Avenue for its atmosphere. As its name implies, the café is decorated with sculpture and paintings. At the tables and on the walls, you’ll find unique artwork that will spark some interesting conversation. Molbert also enjoys Ella’s food, which features a wide-ranging and eclectic menu of appetizers, soup and salad, pizza and burgers, and entrees. The Sunday menu features “Soul Food Sundays” with entrees of fried catfish, crawfish, and fried chicken with sides such as collard greens, red beans and rice, fried okra, pickles or green tomatoes, sweet potato fries, grits and more.



Woody’s Cafe, on 29th Street North, got the vote of both Denese Meteye-James and Evangeline Best. Denese characterizes Woody’s as a “southern restaurant with home-cooked food.” She loves their fish which is served grilled or fried, greens, meat loaf, baked chicken, macaroni and cheese. “Woody’s is very tasty, clean and reasonably priced,” notes Denese.

Evangeline uses Woody’s as a meet and greet for first-time visitors to East Tampa where she has hosted University of South Florida students, faculty members

and other new acquaintances. “At Woody’s there are no surprise menu changes,” and Evangeline enjoys the regular \$4.99 breakfast special of bacon, grits, two eggs, biscuits or toast, or the corn beef hash with grits, two eggs, toast and coffee.

Denese and Evangeline also feel that Woody’s is the place for socializing, particularly after Sunday church, for discussion of spiritual lessons or the latest news.

Be sure to visit these fine restaurants soon. For more information:

Ella’s Americana Folk Art Café
5119 N. Nebraska Avenue,
Tampa, FL 33603
813-234-1000
www.ellaskartcafe.com

Hours: Tuesday - Thursday 5 pm - 11 pm
Friday and Saturday 5 pm to midnight
Sunday 11 am - 9 pm

Woody’s Cafe
3802 North 29th Street, Tampa, FL 33610-7713
813-247-7428

Hours: Tuesday - Sunday 7:30 am - 5:00 pm



L to R: Latonye Wilkins,
Lillian Hodgson,
Marti Woodall

Help For Small Business

Whether your business is new or established, it’s never too late for learning through a new East Tampa Small Business Information Center (SBIC) satellite office.

Open since April, business assistance is provided by Learline Shorty, a Certified Business Analyst. As a former sole proprietor of retail businesses for ten years, with leadership experience at a local Chamber of Commerce, and a B.S. in Accounting and minor in Business Administration, Learline is well equipped with the knowledge and experience to counsel business owners.

“My goal is to personally call on every business in the East Tampa CRA, no matter how large or small,” notes Learline. In the last few months, she has visited many area establishments to inform owners of the free services available through this collaboration by the City of Tampa, Hillsborough County, and the University of South Florida.

Free services include counseling; onsite performance audits; onsite surveys to determine area business owner needs; and, sharing information about free workshops. Eventually, the office will offer onsite workshops tailored to their specific business needs.

The SBIC office is located in the City of Tampa East Tampa Development offices at 3808 N. 22nd Street, Tampa, FL 33610. To schedule FREE, confidential business counseling, please call 813-914-4028 for an appointment.

