

Inside Hillcrest

– Connecting Neighbors to Neighbors –



DECEMBER 2020

HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA

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DECEMBER INSIDE HILLCREST

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A THANKSGIVING STORY

Yes, I know that everything needed for Thanksgiving should be bought before the big day but in the past, a couple of grocery stores were open for last minute shopping. Not this year. EVERYBODY closed. I had decided to make two kinds of stuffing at the last minute and needed another package of stuffing. The only store I could find open was CVS. So, I'm standing there on a sparsely stocked grocery aisle next to a young lady named Jasmine. I said, "If you see stuffing, let me know." She answered, "If you see brown sugar, let me know." No luck. Then she mentioned, "Gee and I have an extra box of stuffing I won't need." I said, "I just bought an extra bag of brown sugar...where do you live?" Her: "Not far". Me: "Me too – meet you in the parking lot in ten minutes."

Ten minutes later as I backed into a parking space at CVS, Jasmine was pulling in next to me. She got out and opened her trunk, I opened my window and like a couple of smooth drug dealers, we traded goods and were on our way. Only in Hollywood...

WANT YOUR OWN PRIVATE DRIVER?

Yes, there are some good driving services out there but how would you like your own private driver? **Jean-Paul Vaucelin** lives in Hillcrest and he can take you where you want to go when you want to go. Schedule your week and call him: What day and time do you want to do your grocery shopping? When is your doctor/dentist appointment? JP is your guy! His business card is on page 18.

AND HE'S BACK...!

I am talking about **Dick Blattner**, former City Commissioner for District 4. He may no longer have a seat on the Commission, but he is still blogging about what goes on in our City. And IH is pleased to include his blogs in our paper. It is not only important to know what is going on in our immediate neighborhood, but also in our City and County. Inside Hillcrest is committed to keeping our residents informed.

Thanks to **Commissioner Linda Sherwood** who is OUR District 6 Commissioner and will be writing for us here at IH. We have County **Commissioner Beam Furr** who let's us know what is going on at the county level and now we have our own **House Representative for District 101, Marie Woodson**, who will be

keeping us apprised of what is going on at the State level. Inside Hillcrest hard copies not only go to local condo communities but also via email to close to 2000 subscribers at last count, including many homeowners in Hollywood Hills and Emerald Hills.

DEAR HELEN

Not only does Inside Hillcrest get calls asking for local business referrals – from mechanics to attorneys to handymen. Oddly enough, we get an occasional email about a situation usually involving neighbors or board members from readers asking for advice – not my forte! These types of emails have increased lately, probably because we are all going through an unprecedented, collective tough time. I always refer readers to **Helen Vella Basilone**. And now I can introduce her as a new neighbor and member of our Hillcrest community!

I met Helen at the Greater Hollywood Chamber of Commerce where she serves on the board and achieved 2019's Ambassador of the Year award. Helen is an expert in helping others with their emotional states and their mindset which is especially needed during the trying times we are all going through right now. She also does a lot of volunteer work with single parents, young offenders, and abused children and won the Jefferson Award for her volunteer services in Central Florida.

Helen is fully qualified in several areas of Emotional Wellness which you can see on her website <https://hvella.com/about-me-helen-vella/>. Her advice column is going to be such a great addition to Inside Hillcrest. So, send in your questions! Helen Vella Basilone looking forward to some great advice for all our residents. And yes, I have not only used Helen's services myself, but I have even given pre-paid sessions with Helen as a closing gift for a couple of clients who were going through a tough transition. Even before this health crisis which I believe has not only affected us physically but has taken a mental and emotional toll on many of us, Helen has conducted video sessions. So, if I am going to give any advice to someone going through a

bad spell, it would be "Don't suffer in silence". Take care of yourself - give Helen a call.

GOOD ADVICE IS BEYOND ALL PRICE

As co-Chair of the Chamber's monthly Real Estate, Construction and Home Alliance Industry Group (yeah that's a long one so we call it RECON), I meet many local professionals that help us when a client, friend or neighbor needs someone reliable. Each month we have a presenter, and the information and knowledge are always a real eye-opener for us.

Amber Gapinski, the owner of A Blast Pressure Washing gave December's RECON presentation and wow! The money that buildings (and homeowners) can save with this preventive maintenance process is mind-boggling. It reminded me of a listing we had in Hallandale in a 7-story catwalk building. The unit was gorgeous, but the building looked awful. Between the initial consultation and the day pictures were taken, the building had pressure cleaned all the walkways, pavers, and pool deck, including the catwalks. We upped the list price 10K – and got it! Curb appeal is still the all-important first impression.

I also invited **Carl Cyrius MBA, a Credit Repair specialist and owner of The Oasis Firm**, who has presented in the past to share some important info about debt collecting. Carl is our go to when one of our buyers needs help upping their credit score. At Inside Hillcrest, we are committed to introducing our readers to local professionals who are tops in their fields, know their business, and are trustworthy.

Barbara Buxton is an amazing woman and a great attorney whose practice focuses on **Estate Planning and Elder Law**. If you need to talk to someone about Healthcare Surrogacy, Guardianship, Wills, Long Term Care/Estate Planning, Probate and Trust issues – anything you need to protect your assets or those of a loved one, call Barbara. Now that we have more time to make sure we are prepared for our future; you should review the preparation plan she prepared for you on page 6.

And of course, **David Treece, Treece Financial Group** who we rely on to shelter and safeguard the assets of our elderly neighbors so they can live comfortably for their lifetime, has a great article about the latest scam that has sprung up due to COVID-19. Please read it.

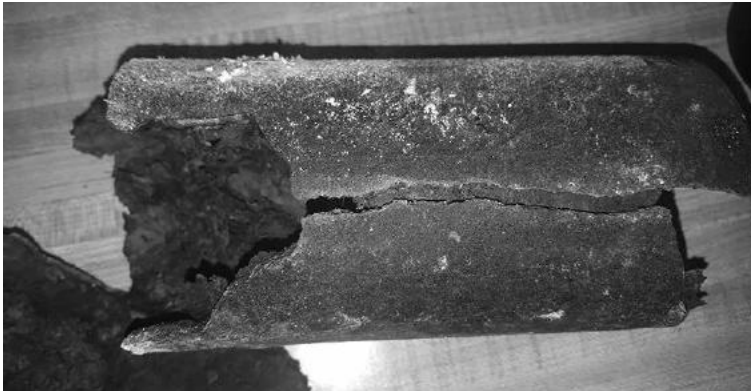
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SOLVING HILLCREST PIPE PROBLEMS

- STEVE SCHNEIDER

Modern construction projects since the mid 1970's have commonly used PVC pipe for sewage and water distribution. However, the Hillcrest community was built before the introduction of PVC pipe and has cast iron pipe. When many Hillcrest buildings were built, cast iron was a good choice as the pipes had a life expectancy of 75 to 100 years under ideal circumstances. However, iron pipes can deteriorate much faster and many have failures within 25 to 50 years of installation. This is because cast iron pipes are subject to rust that can lead to blockage or breakage and cause severe damage to the property. Also, today's waste has more toxins, chemicals and acidic waste, which work to deteriorate the cast iron more rapidly from the inside of the pipe.



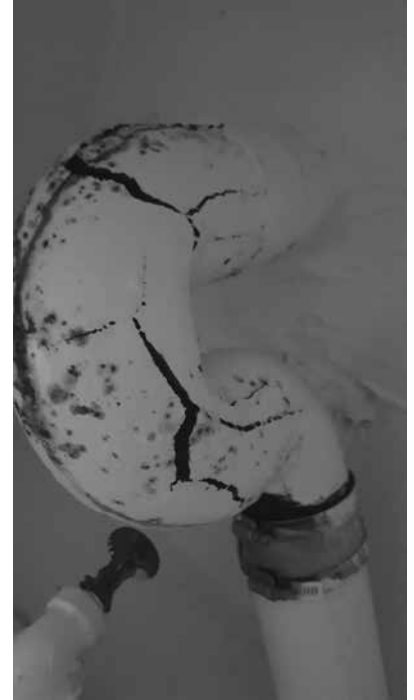
When cast iron pipes burst or break it can lead to a domino effect of more pipes breaking and causing even more flooding, says Ilya Levitis, the owner of Disasterstruck Public Adjusters, Inc. Water damage due to a broken or leaking pipe or water line can be devastating in terms of the repair cost. If undiscovered the long-term damage can become structural due to deterioration and dry rot. If you have experienced a loss or you are observing symptoms of water damage to your home or property it is important to understand what your insurance will cover. At the outset this would seem like a simple call to your insurance company. It is generally not. These types of claims are very complex in terms of coverage, exclusions, exceptions to exclusions and policy definitions.



And while condo association insurance policies often cover such situations, insurance companies will fight to minimize their losses which is why smart home and business owners hire a public adjuster before filing a claim. Compounding the complexity of insurance policies, exclusions, exceptions and a confusing situation, many volunteer association board members don't always know what to do as they may not know the ins and outs of insurance policies. These realities mean condo boards should consult with a public adjuster who knows how to handle commercial insurance claims, and as many of our presidents remember, one of the best is Ilya Levitis, the owner of Disasterstruck Public Adjusters Inc.

Levitas has been fighting for Hillcrest buildings since the days of Hurricane Wilma in 2005.

Condos are considered commercial accounts. Levitis is licensed by the state to represent commercial and individual homeowner insurance claims for over 14 years. Learn more at Disasterstruck.com or call (954) 455-1380. The straight-talking owner who has represented many Hillcrest associations over the years has dealt with everything from hurricane and storm damages to wind claims for roof replacements and pipe claims that leak or burst. Public Insurance Adjusters only get



paid if they win the case for their client although they must pay for all the investigative work needed to document an insurance claim. If the insurance company rejects the claim, Levitis does not get paid either.

Levitis is currently representing Hillcrest 26 and Hillcrest 9 on pipe claims. Both buildings have experienced damages from collapsed cast iron pipe systems. Mark Roth, the president of Hillcrest 26, talked to Inside Hillcrest about his experience working with Levitis and Disasterstruck:

"I am not only the president of Hillcrest East No. 26 for the past 12 years, I am also a retired trial attorney who only represented plaintiffs. In my capacity as a trial attorney, I was practicing when public adjusters were first recognized by the State of Florida. I quickly learned that a public adjuster with former experience as an insurance adjuster had insights from his professional experience which I did not have. They knew the 'other side'. When I joined the Board at #26, Ilya Levitis had just been retained to re-open the association's Wilma hurricane claim. He succeeded far beyond the performance of the first adjuster. Later, Ilya pointed out a possible claim which we had under an obscure Florida Statute. Again, Ilya performed beyond expectations, netting a substantial sum for the Hillcrest #26 association."

Roth goes on to say, "After Hurricane Irma, with several units having damage as well as the association itself, not everyone wanted Ilya for their adjuster. Each to his own. However, I was able to compare the performance of other adjusters to that of Ilya on comparable claims. Ilya outperformed other adjusters by a large percentage. We recently settled our association claim for damages from hurricane Irma, and, without divulging specific information, let me state that the results were outstanding! Ilya is now representing us in a collapsed pipe claim. As you know most buildings of Hillcrest were constructed during the period of the mid-60s to the late 70s and there are many questionable pipe installations with numerous collapses.

Continued on Pg. 4

SCAM ALERT: DON'T FALL FOR PHONY CONTACT TRACERS

The pandemic has given rise to a number of new scams designed to part you from your money. One of the latest involves phony contact tracers. While contact tracing is considered an important tool for helping to contain the spread of COVID-19 in communities, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) warns of a growing trend where scammers are pretending to be contact tracers.

How It Works

According to complaints received by the FTC, as well as a number of state and city officials throughout the country, a typical scam may unfold as follows:

- You receive a call from someone claiming to be a local public health worker, saying that you have been in close proximity to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 and that you need to self-isolate and take a test. The caller refuses to identify the person who had tested positive, citing "confidentiality."
- The caller then requests that you provide some form of payment to cover the cost of mailing a COVID-19 test kit to you. The scammer instills a sense of urgency by claiming you must comply within a stated time period or face penalties for non-compliance.


How to Avoid the Scam

According to the FTC, legitimate contract tracers may ask you for your name, address, health information and the names of people and places you have visited. The agency says real contact tracers need health information, not money or personal financial information. The FTC offers the following tips for avoiding phony contact tracers:

1. Real contact tracers won't ask you for money. Only scammers insist on payment by gift card, money transfer, or cryptocurrency.

2. Your immigration status doesn't matter for contact tracing, so real tracers won't ask. If they do, you can bet it's a scam.
3. Contact tracing doesn't require your bank account or credit card number. Never share account information with anybody who contacts you asking for it.
4. Legitimate contact tracers will never ask for your Social Security number. Never give any part of your Social Security number to anyone who contacts you.
5. Do not click on a link in a text or email. Doing so can download malware onto your device.

For more information about contact tracing in your area, visit Florida's state health department's website.



David Treece
Registered Representative*

Shoreview Professional Building
9999 NE 2nd Avenue | Suite 203
Miami Shores, FL 33138

C 305.495.5413 T 305.751.8855
david@davidtreece.com F 305.751.0068
www.davidtreece.com

A VERY FAIR WARNING



I am not sure why Hillcrest buildings continue to violate the statutes concerning fees for applications and estoppel certificates but it is out of hand. I am not sure what or who initiated the audit of some of the buildings a few years back, but at that time, some of our associations had to refund all the excess fees and pay fines. Maybe that needs to happen again. And the ironic part of this is that most of the offending buildings have professional property managers who should know better. If you bought a unit and were charged more than \$100 for your **application fee**, you have a right to demand a refund from the association. No, they cannot call it a transfer fee, or anything else to justify it. **Estoppel fees** are paid by the seller who then moves out of the building but many remain Inside Hillcrest subscribers OR may have moved to another building. If you were charged more than \$250

for the estoppel (look on your closing statement), you have a right to ask for your money back also. Shame on the Hillcrest buildings who violate the statutes to make a few extra bucks!

Estoppel certificates

As of July 1, 2017, there is a cap on the amount an association can charge for an estoppel certificate on the property. An association can charge up to \$250 to unit owners who are current in their assessments. They can charge an additional \$100 for "expedited" estoppel certificates (delivered within three business days), and another \$150 to owners who are delinquent in their assessments. This is a maximum of \$500 for an expedited, delinquent estoppel certificate. The new law also requires certificates to be delivered within 10 business days and remain valid for 30 days. It also standardizes the information each certificate must include so that each estoppel contains the same information.

Application Fees

Condominium associations cannot charge any fees for the sale, mortgage, lease, sublease, or other transfer of a unit unless the association is required to approve such transfer and a fee for such approval is provided for in the declaration articles or bylaws. Such fee may be preset, but in no event may such fee exceed \$100 per applicant other than husband/wife or parent/dependent child, which are considered one applicant. These fees are to be used for screening and transfer approval only, not for capital contributions (Section 718.112(2)(i), Florida Statutes).

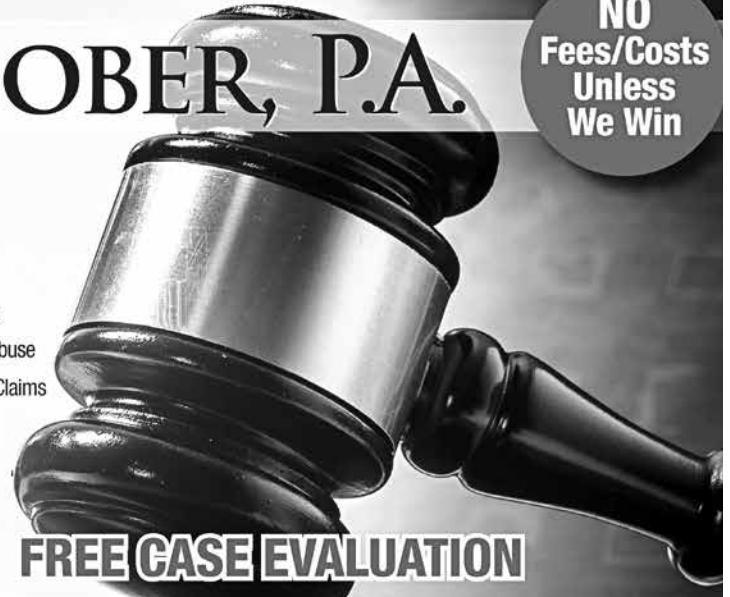
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- Medical Malpractice
- Dog/Animal Bites
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- Unpaid Overtime Wage Claims
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The hiring of a lawyer is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisements. Before you decide, ask us to send you free written information about our qualifications and experience.

Continued from Pg. 2



Ilya is also representing another Hillcrest Association in a pipe collapse claim. I have observed the way in which Ilya goes about preparing his claims. The detail and planning, gathering of information, and the preparation for final settlement, mediation, or trial are among the best I have ever seen. I may have some photos of some examples of collapsed pipes. I will attach a few to this so that you can see first-hand what Ilya is talking about when he speaks of a "collapsed pipe." If you have such an issue, I would strongly suggest that you consider making such a claim. If you have water damage due to a leaking or broken cast iron pipe some of the symptoms to look for

are water backups, slow drains, or discoloration of tile or drywall. Or you can call and consult Ilya Levitis at no cost to determine whether or not you have a viable claim."

It is important to note that the pipes referenced above are the responsibility of the association not the individual owners. Therefore, if individual unit owners have concerns, they should immediately bring them to the attention of their Board of Directors



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Rotem Amir, MD completed her education at the prestigious Tel-Aviv University. She then entered the renowned Cleveland Clinic Program and completed her Internal Medicine Specialty with honors. She served on the medical jeopardy team and won several tournaments. Dr. Amir is double board certified in internal medicine and continues to provide the most updated care to her patients. She shares her love for practicing medicine with her patients at her established medical practice in Hollywood, FL., where she is an expert diagnostician and loves to take care of seniors. Additionally, she is an Associate Clinical Professor Nova Southeastern University.

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COVID 19 has been a wake-up call for most of us. What if I get sick? What will happen to my family if I am not here to take care of them or if I become incapacitated? Am I prepared?

These estate planning questions are addressed in what I call the "Simple Seven Preparation Plan". I challenge you to take the following test and see if you are prepared.

1. Do you have a Will? A Will governs any asset you own in your individual name at death. It provides for the administration of that property, directs whatever remains after the payment of your debts, expenses of administration, and estate taxes be paid to your beneficiaries or if you have created a Trust, to be added to your Revocable Trust.

2. Do you have, or would it be best if you have a Trust? A Trust is an agreement that is revocable and amendable by you. You can be the Trustee and the beneficiary of your Trust. The Trust becomes irrevocable at your death. Property transferred to the Trust during your lifetime will avoid probate upon your death. In the Trust you name successor Trustees, and beneficiaries who are able to benefit from the Trust assets during your incapacity and after your death.

The New Rules of the Road

– by Carl Cyrius, The Oasis Firm

Recently, the CFPB issued a new interpretation to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (FDCPA). The intent was to bring more protection and clarity for consumers. However, what occurred is more like a double-edge sword. This article will shed some light on the changes and what to expect.

The main reason for the changes was to factor uses of new technology that did not exist when the original laws were enacted in 1977. Back then and until recently, the 2 ways a debt collector would contact you are either via snail mail or landline. Now they can contact you via social media, emails, texts, and any phone number they have for you.

While the CFPB intended to modernize debt collection rules and give greater control to consumers for communicating with debt collectors, it also opened the doors for unwanted communication. Now while you browse on Facebook or Instagram, you may receive some unpleasant surprises in your direct message inbox.

Luckily, you can put a stop to this by simply sending the debt collector a debt validation letter. Until then, they have the right to call you 7 times in a 7-day period. If you need help with a debt validation letter, we can help. If you would like to know how to gather evidence in case you are feeling harassed and your rights as a consumer are being violated, we can help with that as well. Feel free to schedule a free consultation with one of our credit experts at The Oasis Firm.

ARE YOU PREPARED?

3. Do you have a Durable Power of Attorney? A Durable Power of Attorney names a person to serve as your Agent to handle your legal and financial affairs. Your Agent is given powers to sign checks, invest assets, sign tax return, renew or cancel insurance, sell real estate. Some powers require a separate grant to be effective. Being a "durable" power means that your attorney-in-fact is authorized to continue to act while you are incapacitated.

4. Do you have a Designation of Health Care Surrogate? A Designation of Health Care Surrogate names a person to act for you to make health care decision when you are not able to make them for yourself.

5. Do you have a Living Will? The Living Will is used to state your wishes regarding the use of life-sustaining measures if you become terminally ill.

6. Do you have Preneed Funeral Arrangements? Pre-Need funeral arrangements allows you to pay now for a service you will need later. Its purchase provides peace of mind for your loved ones. After your death, all they need to do is call the funeral home and they will help put your funeral plan in place.

7. Do you have Long Term Care Insurance? Long term care insurance with help pay the tremendously high cost of your care in your home, an assisted living facility or a nursing home should you become mentally or physically incapacitated.

If you answered yes to all seven questions, congratulations! You are prepared. If you answered no to all or some of the questions, don't worry. You still have time to create your own "Simple Seven Preparation Plan" so that you too can be prepared.



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Power washing your condominium buildings including your clubhouses should be a part of every community's maintenance routine, not just homeowner's.

All building exteriors are exposed to harsh elements all the time; that's their job! Natural conditions like sun, wind, dirt, ultraviolet rays, insects, birds – not to mention things like rain, pollutants, and car exhaust – always take a beating on your home and contribute to its soiling, discoloration, and damage.

Power washing is the most effective and efficient way to clean these exteriors to safeguard your investment, time, and family's health.

Prevents Damage: Crevices are especially susceptible to the accumulation of dirt, algae, and grime. Simultaneously, mildew and mold thrive in shaded areas and can grow unchecked for years if not correctly taken care of.

Additionally, the South Florida sun beats down harshly year around, discoloring and wearing away outside surfaces. Power washing removes dirt and grime and prevents it from turning into permanent damage. Some of the most common allergic triggers are pollen, mold spores, and dust mites, all of which are washed away by power washing.

Restores Curb Appeal and Increases Property Value: Pressure washing is a restorative process. By removing years of

stains and baked-in dirt, power washing turns years back on the clock to help your property look brand new.

If you are a homeowner looking to sell, power washing could be the difference between making a sale and not. Exteriors degrade, discolor, and oxide as time passes. Because of this, your property can lose value. Power washing helps a fresh-looking paint job take, making it free of peeling and chipping, and it helps your home look new on its own. A beautiful house is much easier to rent or sell.

Curb appeal goes for condo buildings too! When you're ready to act on the benefits power washing, our team at **A Blast Pressure Washing** is here to help.



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Stress, Anxiety, Fear and Isolation are a big part of our lives these days, and probably will be for some more months to come.

Our forefathers only had to worry about where to get the food for the family and fight off animal life, however to-day stress and anxiety are the new fight or flight responses and causing many diseases to occur in our bodies. Physical and mental.

Controlling or managing our panic anxiety, stress, and worry is a struggle for many, but there are techniques and products (not medication) you can use on a daily basis to keep your stress levels in check.

People are getting angrier quicker and this applies to young children as well as adults.

Children are more stressed today than ever. The homework, virtual learning, peer pressure, and technology all play a part in a child's stress. Unfortunately, this stress, worry, anxiety leads to a larger number of child suicides and drug addiction.

So how can you help yourself?

- Take time to Breathe – take deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- Get outside and walk even for only 10 minutes

- Talk to someone over the phone or video – again even for just 10 minutes
- Volunteer – you can do this from your home – helping others also helps you
- Watch comedy movies
- Read positive articles and books.

There are many more techniques however I can cover them at a different time.

Look after yourself, stay calm and enjoy the holidays even though they are different this year it is still the holidays. Be grateful for what you have and reflect on what the holidays are really about.

Happy Holidays

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STATE OF THE COUNTY - County Commissioner Beam Furr - District 6



Greetings Hillcrest Residents,

The year 2020 will ring throughout history as one of the more significant in modern civilization. It will be up there with 1865, 1939, 1968, and other landmark years as a cornerstone of American history and human life. The significance of this year cannot be understated. But time does not stop. We are now rolling into 2021, and it is time to preview another year. We are hoping it is an exciting and better year for residents in Broward County. Your Broward County Commission is looking forward to working on significant projects that will make our lives better for years to come. 2021 could prove to be to be just as, if not more significant and history-making.

Before we can focus on any of our major projects or initiatives in 2021, we must keep the COVID-19 crisis under control. This public health crisis is still raging, and we must take all the action we can to stop it. December saw days with over 3,000 COVID-19 deaths – more than were killed in the 9/11 attacks. We are living in, what could be, a tragic winter, where we have a 9/11 count of deaths nearly every single day – especially targeting our most vulnerable residents. Think how much 9/11 changed our lives – it spawned two wars, changed our entire system of security and safety, and altered how we interact as Americans. That all happened because of one terrible day, and we are now facing that scale of tragedy daily. COVID-19 should warrant the same scale of response – the same caution, the same unity, and the same collective action. Including wearing masks, practice social distancing, and adhering to guidelines. We can and will do that in Broward County – but we must do it together.

The good news is that we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Several vaccine variants have already shown significant progress. In addition, Memorial Hospital will be one of the first five hospitals in the state of Florida to receive this life-saving vaccine. Our area will be on the frontline in the fight to defeat COVID-19. Until the day comes when we receive the vaccine, we must continue to be cautious – we do not want things to get worse, when they are close to getting better.

Even once COVID-19 is solved as a health issue, we must cope with economic repercussions. That will be our primary challenge in 2021. What we should be doing is looking to use C.A.R.E.S. Act Funding to create good paying jobs in Broward County. During the Great Depression, stimulus funds were used to create the Civilian Conservation Corps, which employed millions in public works projects that bettered our infrastructure and gave people a job. We have serious needs – in the environment, in transportation, in solid waste, in our arts and culture scene – all areas where we need additional employees to help build capital projects and run programs that result from them. We should use stimulus funds to get people hired again while advancing the needs of our County.

One of the primary needs in 2021, is our environment. Climate change has not stopped due to the pandemic – emissions are now nearly where they were before the shutdown. In early 2021, Broward County will be releasing its latest update to the Climate Change Action Plan – the first since 2015. This update will incorporate contributions from scientists, experts, elected officials, business leaders, and residents like you to create the most sustainable and resilient Broward County.

This includes priority flood maps, seawalls, new electric buses, new electric vehicle charging stations, purple piping and clean water facilities, and much, much more. These projects are worth investing in now, instead of paying a much greater price in the future.

Another area where I expect major progress in 2021 is transportation. We are more than two years beyond the passage of our Penny for Transportation surtax, and this year will see our biggest steps yet in putting this money to good use. Our five-year plan truly kicks into gear in 2021, with major intersection improvements, massively expanded bus routes and additional hours of scheduling, traffic light synchronization, and more. This also includes expanded paratransit services for our residents.

These are not the only issues we will face in 2021! From solid waste to early childhood education and much more in-between, I expect this to be our most productive year yet. In the meantime, it is important that you stay safe and stay healthy. We are almost there. Happy New Year – I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Contact Us

I hope we can be together again soon. I miss visiting my friends in Hillcrest. Until then, you may always contact my office for anything in which you feel I may be of assistance. Our District office is conveniently located in the lobby of the Hollywood Branch of the Broward County Public Library at 2600 Hollywood Blvd, next to Hollywood City Hall. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been temporarily closed. However, my staff is working from our office in Fort Lauderdale, which is open Monday through Friday, from 9 AM to 5 PM, and from other locations within our District. If you would like to schedule an appointment, or you have a great idea, suggestion or an issue that needs my attention, feel free to call me at 954-357-7006/786-559-2306 or send me an email at bfurr@broward.org.

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WHEN THE PRESIDENT THINKS THEY'RE THE KING

- By Eric Glazer, Esq. - Published November 30, 2020

So all this talk about the Presidency lately has got me thinking about an issue that comes up every week in my practice for the past 30 years or so. I get a call from someone on a Board of Directors. And they tell me that they have a President on the Board who is a real dictator. He or she doesn't listen to any other board member, makes decisions on their own, signs contracts, sets policy, hires and fires people --- all without input from the other board members. Again – I get calls like this once a week at least.

So does the president of a board have any power above and beyond other board members, or are they simply on par with the other board members?

Well...let's look at some arbitration decisions.....(A single director has no power to act in a representative capacity for the corporation on matters for which a vote of the directors is required.); *June Katchen and Lawrence Katchen v. Braemer Isle Condominium Association, Inc.*, Arb. Case No. 98-5485, Final Order (August 5, 1999) (Association president, acting alone, did not have the authority to act for the board and bind the association).

In point of fact, an association president has no greater authority than any other member of the board. See *Aldrich v. Tahitian Gardens Condominium Association, Inc.*, Arb. Case No. 96-0472, Summary Final Order (May 22, 1997). The president has no power to take action on behalf of the association in the absence of a specific order or resolution of a majority of the board.

Your bylaws may allow the President to chair the meetings and sign contracts that have already been approved by the board, but that's about it.

So while it's clear that a president has no greater authority than any other director, suppose that president doesn't stop acting like a dictator? What should the board do? Well remember, the officers of the Board serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors. The Board always has the right to call a new Board meeting / organizational meeting --- and remove that person as President. No big deal. But even if they remove that person as president – that person still remains as a member of the board. The unit owners can have a recall and remove that person completely from the Board – but the Directors can very easily remove that person from the President's spot --- and then hopefully – problem solved.

I have to say that I'm still surprised by some of these calls and how one person can sometimes bully a whole board or even a whole community. Why don't people fight back with simply removing that person from the Presidency?

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Every so often we get a letter from a building board member or unit owner asking about an issue in their building. We recently received this: We are having an issue with someone smoking a cigar every night on their balcony and it is severely impacting the unit above them.

- Do any of the buildings have restrictions on smoking? If so is it on everything or just cigarettes, cigars, pipe, marijuana, or vaping?
- Do the restrictions limit people from smoking in common areas? Limited common areas? Certain amount of feet from the buildings?
- Do they have a compliance committee to enforce the restrictions?
- I assume smoking wasn't restricted when our rules and regulations were written (so many years ago). Has anyone amended their documents to include restrictions?

We actually sold a unit for a Hillcrester who couldn't take the neighbor's cigarette smoke infiltrating her unit. It was affecting her health. When we get these letters, we forward to Eric Glazer, our go-to Condo Lawyer. He sent us this:

CAN A CONDO PREVENT SMOKING IN A PRIVATE UNIT?

We all know that if we choose to live in a community association in Florida, we will be subject to reasonable rules and regulations. For example, we may want to take a swim at 2 a.m. but the pool may be off limits at that hour. We may need permission as to who can rent or buy our unit. We may be subject to rules regarding the hours of the clubhouse, where we can park, and how many guests we can invite to the gym at one time. We're used to rules and regulations of this variety that involve use of the common areas. The question however iscan the association prevent you from doing things in your unit, like preventing you from smoking?

Any discussion of just how far an association and its members can go in regulating use of units must start with a case decided by The Florida Supreme Court in 2002 called Woodside Condominium Association v. Jahren. In Woodside, a unit owner was renting out his units for about 18

years in a row, when the association members passed an amendment to the declaration of condominium which in effect, banned the rental of units. Jahren and the association wound up in litigation, with the unit owner arguing that it would be unfair to deprive him of the ability to rent after 18 years. The Florida Supreme Court cited to **Hidden Harbour Estates, Inc. v. Norman, 309 So.2d 180 (Fla. 4th DCA 1975)**, to further explain the restrictive nature of condominium ownership and living:

[I]nherent in the condominium concept is the principle that to promote the health, happiness, and peace of mind of the majority of the unit owners since they are living in such close proximity and using facilities in common, each unit owner must give up a certain degree of freedom of choice which he might otherwise enjoy in separate, privately owned property. Condominium unit owners comprise a little democratic sub society of necessity more restrictive as it pertains to use of condominium property than may be existent outside the condominium organization.

Finding that the amendment did not violate public policy or the owner's constitutional rights, The Florida Supreme Court held that there are very few restrictions to the member's ability to amend their declaration.... and restricting the ability to rent was reasonably related to improving the community.

So in light of the Woodside case, it's pretty clear to me that if the owners in a condominium pass an amendment that would prohibit smoking in their unit, that amendment would be valid because there is no constitutional right to smoke in your unit. Moreover, it's an amendment that is not arbitrary or capricious and on the contrary is designed to promote the health and welfare of the community. Now before you start worrying about whether or not your condo association can stop you from drinking large sodas in your unit or eating greasy cheeseburgers, remember that a court would likely strike down such an amendment because unlike smoke that starts in one unit and enters other units, the act of that one owner in eating unhealthy in his or her unit has no bearing on the health and welfare of the other owners or occupants in the community.

NOVEMBER 2020 STATE OF THE MARKET

– by Cindy Abraham, Keller Williams Realty Professionals A Team Florida



Closings were up a little in November with 14 total as compared to 12 in September and October. Currently there are 53 active listings and 13 more went under contract; of which seven were in the all-age buildings. The low and mid-rise buildings still account for about 20% of the listings and sales.

Showings slowed a bit except for corner units and units in rentable buildings. 1 bedroom units accounted for 50% of the pending and closed sales. November was a banner month for remodeled corners which made a big comeback in the high sales prices we saw back in February. Days on Market also looked good last month.

PARKVIEW AT HILLCREST LISTED IN THE MLS



Currently in Parkview at Hillcrest, there are four single-family homes (none with pools but one with a lake view) and 1 townhome listed in the MLS. It is a little tricky to pull them up in the MLS. Parts of Parkview at Hillcrest are zoned as Hillcrest Country Club South in the tax records so if you are looking by subdivision, you need to list both.

A townhome at 5030 Eucalyptus Drive listed at \$359,000 went under contract during November as well as a 4/2/1 single family home listed for \$659,000.00 located at 1465 Myrtle Oak Terr.

Curious as to how much equity you have built up in your Parkview home? Call us at 8-HILLCREST or email INFO@ATeamFlorida.com.

PENDING SALES

Building	Unit #	B/B	SF	Orig. List	Final List	Sold/DOM
25	C-821	2/2	1132	175,000		21
24	C-1020	2/2	1284	170,000	160,000	45
16	404	1/1/1	775	129,000		21
16	306	1/1/0	695	115,000		8
26	208	2/2	844	114,900		53
16	506	1/1/0	1344	111,000		29
25	712	2/2	1284	197,000		18
27	C-1001	2/2	1344	225,000		72
24	C-201	2/2	1284	180,000		29
3	304	2/2	980	159,999		3
27	814	1/1/1	844	132,900	125,900	34
18	308	1/1/1	775	114,500	109,900	136
27	907	1/1/1	844	120,000	95,000	270

CLOSED SALES

Building	Unit #	B/B	SF	Orig. List	Final List	Sold	DOM
25	C-902	2/2	1600	235,000		230,000	5
25	C-502	2/2	1344	230,000	109,950	102,500	30
23	C-901	2/2	1312	195,000	189,000	185,000	19
23	C-300	2/2	1284	189,999	184,500	168,000	39
16	110	1/1/1	775	135,000		121,250	19
21	700	2/2	1216	132,000		123,000	55
10	105	1/1/0	672	130,000		124,000	17
21	307	1/1/1	896	120,000		115,000	76
21	906	1/1/1	844	126,000	120,000	119,000	77
23	C-711	2/2	1284	120,000		100,000	137
23	C-819	2/2	1284	129,000	119,000	102,000	76
24	304	1/1/1	896	119,500	117,500	105,000	45
24	406	1/1/1	844	115,000		105,000	106
21	309	1/1/1	844	102,000	89,900	90,000	304

ACTIVE LISTINGS in the MLS:

Single Family Homes:

Address:	Bed/Bath	Square Footage	List Price	DOM
4320 Large Leaf Ln	5/3	2,795	675,000.00	
1455 Myrtle Oak Terr	4/2/1	2,795	655,000.00	
1383 Silk Road Dr	4/2/1	2,795	649,999.00	
1396 Silk Road Dr	4/2/0	1,901	629,000.00	
4378 Ficus Street	4/2/0	2,329	575,000.00	
4645 Ficus Street	3/2/0	1,742	550,000.00	
4395 Ficus Street	3/2/1	2,220	630,000.00	
4414 Ficus Street	3/2/1	1,961	534,055.00	

Townhomes:

1001 Banyan Drive	3/2/1	1,769	480,000.00	
4023 Black Olive Dr	3/2/1	1,768	439,000.00	
4810 Eucalyptus	3/2/1	1,561	390,000.00	

CLOSED SALES:

4658 Greenway Drive	4/2/1	3,157	649,000.00	315
1427 Pongam Terr	3/2/1	2,816	519,000.00	222
4102 Long Leaf Ln	3/2/1	1,804	345,000.00	318

December Kitchen Korner - by Cindy Abraham

Over the Thanksgiving weekend, I got into a cooking frenzy and tried a couple recipes that are usually not my forte but here goes. If you have an afternoon that you would like to spend creating a special dish, this one is for you. I can't believe it myself but I actually made Beef Wellington and biscotti and neither were very difficult. As for ingredients, everything is cheaper at Aldi's but you need Publix for any type of specialty meat.

The Beef Wellington was over the top delicious and over the top expensive. Even when I told the butcher at Publix, I needed a beef tenderloin between 1 and 1 ½ pounds he said, "It is going to be pricey". Uh yeah...almost 30 bucks! But it was worth it especially since we only eat meat a couple time a month. Easy ingredients if you ignore the part about making your own puff pastry – that ain't happening when I can buy store bought. I did spring for fresh thyme. You will need kitchen twine and a food processor. If you don't have a rolling pin, use an empty wine bottle. 1 ½ pounds serves 4. The leftovers were great too – just reheat in foil in a hot over for about 10 minutes.

BEEF WELLINGTON



1 ½ pound center cut beef tenderloin trimmed
Olive oil
1 pack white button mushrooms (about 12 oz.)
1 shallot cut in half
2 garlic cloves
1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
6 thin slices prosciutto
1 TBS Dijon mustard
Flour for rolling out puff pastry
½ lb. store bought puff pastry thawed
1 large egg beaten
½ tsp coarse salt

Place the mushrooms, shallots, garlic and thyme in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped. In a large sauté pan over medium heat, cook the mixture stirring until most of the liquid is evaporated. Season with salt and pepper and set aside to cool.

Tie the tenderloin in 2 or 3 places to hold it together while cooking. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Heat a heavy bottomed skillet lightly coated with olive oil until hot and sear all sides of the meat including the ends. Remove from heat and smear lightly all over with the Dijon mustard and let cool.

Take a sheet of plastic wrap and shingle the prosciutto so it forms a rectangle that is big enough to wrap over the tenderloin. Use a spatula to spread the mushroom mixtures over the prosciutto. Place the tenderloin in the middle and using the plastic wrap, wrap it up tight. Tuck in the ends of the prosciutto and twist the ends of the plastic to seal it completely and hold it in a log shape. Refrigerate for 30 minutes to maintain the shape.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

On a lightly floured surface roll out the puff pastry to form a rectangle large enough to completely encompass the prosciutto wrapped beef. Get your beaten egg ready. Remove the plastic from the beef and set it in the middle of the pastry. Fold the longer sides over the meat and brush the edges with the egg to seal. Brush the ends with the egg and fold over to completely seal the beef. Top with coarse salt and place seam-side down on a rimmed baking sheet.

Brush the top of the pastry with egg and make a few slits in the top of the pastry with a knife tip to allow steam to escape while cooking. Bake for about 30 minutes until pastry is golden brown (meat will be medium rare so add some time if you like your meet medium to well done).

Remove from oven and let it rest before cutting into thick slices.

I am not going to even say "I don't bake" anymore because if it is easy enough and not something that I will eat at one sitting, I have found a couple recipes I really like. This one I made twice in one week. The first time was a little confusing but the second time was a cinch.

Aldi's had dark chocolate covered espresso beans so of course I bought them just because. Not sure why someone would want to eat them. Yes, dark chocolate is good on almost anything but who eats coffee beans? Anyway, they were the inspiration for me to try this recipe that called for coffee flavored chocolate. Never heard of that either... As for roasting blanched hazelnuts, no thanks. CVS has blanched roasted hazelnuts every so often. Way easier than roasting them yourself. If you get all the equipment and ingredients ready ahead of time, this one is really a breeze to make.

You will need two large parchment covered rimmed baking sheets, a hand mixer, gloves, 1 large bowl, 4 small bowls and a big sharp knife. The hot baking sheets will need to sit somewhere to cool so if you have a couple wire racks or cutting boards, that'll work. I separated the recipe into the steps that the ingredients are mixed together – it makes it easier for me not to leave something out...

COFFEE-HAZELNUT BISCOTTI

2/3 cup blanched roasted hazelnuts coarsely chopped
3 oz. coffee flavored chocolate or semisweet chocolate coarsely chopped (this is where I pulverized the 3 oz. of the dark chocolate covered espresso beans and used that instead).

3 large eggs (divided use)
2 TBS instant espresso powder (or any instant coffee)
2 tsp vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
1 stick unsalted butter softened
1 cup sugar

Place racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and preheat to 325. Prepare two rimmed baking pans lined with parchment paper.

Put the chopped nuts and chocolate in a small bowl.

Continued on Pg. 13



Continued from Pg. 12

Separate yolk from 1 egg and save the white in a small bowl. Place the yolk in another small bowl and add the two other eggs to the yolk, the espresso powder and the vanilla extract and beat with a fork to combine and dissolve.

Whisk flour, baking powder and salt in a medium bowl and set aside.

In a large bowl, beat softened butter and sugar until light and creamy, about 2 minutes. Scrape down the sides and add egg mixture. Beat just to combine. Scrape down sides of bowl and beat until smooth. Add the flour mixture and mix on low speed to combine.

Put on gloves. Add the chopped hazelnuts and chocolate and mix it in thoroughly with your hands. Divide the dough into two parts and form each ball of dough into a 5” square about 1 inch thick and place each square in the middle of the parchment lined baking sheets. Beat the reserved egg white until foamy and brush over the two loaves.

This part gets a little weird but place each baking sheet on a separate rack in the oven. Set the timer for 15 minutes and then switch the racks top to bottom and then front to back. Why? I don’t know but that’s what the recipe says to do and I am very obedient. Bake for another 15 minutes.

Remove from oven and let cool for 15 minutes but DON’T TURN OFF THE OVEN. It says to transfer the loaves to a cutting board but I cut them right on the sheet pan – up to you. Cut each loaf into slices about 1/2” thick. Arrange them cut side down on the same pan in a row. Put the pans back in the oven and do the same thing – bake for 15 minutes and then rotate the pans and bake another 15 minutes.

Remove from oven, let cool. Biscotti can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature up to a week. Dunk in your morning coffee or your after-dinner red wine and enjoy!

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I hate when Walmart doesn't have what I need and I have to go home, change out of my pajamas, comb my hair and go to Target.

When parents start to crack during COVID: "Mommy, am I adopted?" "Not yet no, honey. I just put the ad out yesterday."

Anyone else feel like life is being written by a 4th grader right now? "And there was this virus and everyone was scared. And then the world ran out of toilet paper. Yeah and then there was no school for like a month and then it snowed."

Do not let them take your temperature when you enter a store. It is a scam. They are erasing your memory. I went in for bread and milk and came out with 6 bottles of wine!

All these men and young people bitching about wearing a face mask... try wearing a bra in the summer!

Remember when I told you that I would be more productive if I had more time? I was wrong.

How is your summer body looking right about now? Mine is looking like I have a great personality.

I swear, I just went into the kitchen to get another snack and I heard my fridge say, "OMG what the hell do you want now?!"

Sometimes I wonder if all this is happening because I didn't forward that message to 10 other people.

First time in history we can save the human race by lying in front of our TV and doing nothing. Let's not screw this up!





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10 PEARLS OF WISDOM FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON AND NEW YEAR

– BY THE BRAHMA KUMARIS. SUBMITTED BY ETTA STEVENS



Meditation is a link with God to become pure and powerful. It is also an inner introspection and visualization of the spiritual self or soul and the Supreme Being or God. We become stable, more loving, and completely peaceful by learning to meditate and practicing it regularly in the day and every day.

We are sharing in this message a beautiful collection of 10 different pearls of meditation. Every pearl is a rich inner experience that will bring us closer to the Supreme and make our life valuable and filled with goodness and strength.

1. Experience for 1 minute every hour with the inner eye of wisdom, the soul - a beautiful sparkling star of radiant light just above the eyebrows and radiate the qualities of peace, love, and joy in the form of white light to everyone.

2. Remind yourself 10 times in the day – *I am the child of God - the sun of spiritual wisdom. I travel into his rays, I connect, I absorb and I radiate his light and might into the universe and remove the darkness of negativity.* influence of my weaknesses. This freedom gives me the ability to enjoy this moment without filling the mind with unnecessary doubts and questions. It gives the ability to bring about progress in my life, whatever the circumstance may be.

3. Sit with God every morning in the world of pure and deep silence – the soul world and experience the deep peace of God - the Ocean of peace and stillness. Clean the soul of inner hurt and pain and make it powerful.

4. Talk to yourself a few times in the day – I am a being of bliss and contentment. *I look upwards and feel God's rays of bliss falling on me. I bathe in these rays and they wash away my impurities like hatred and jealousy for others.*

5. Look in the mirror of God's remembrance every day and make yourself beautiful with all qualities and powers. You are a reflection of God's goodness. Look at others with the vision of this goodness and they will also become beautiful.

6. Talk to God all the time. Tell him – *You are my most valuable friend and companion. You are with me at every step. I hold your hand, I experience your blessings, I feel I am in your heart and I forget all my sorrows and difficulties.*

7. Whenever you feel stressed, call God down from the soul world. Experience the Supreme Being of Light in your home, at your workplace, radiating his rays of power all around and making the atmosphere charged with positivity.

8. Every hour travel to God in the vehicle of soul consciousness and sit in front of him in the soul world. Unburden yourself, tell him your problems, take his guidance, and experience his love. Become light and relaxed. 9. Your remembrance of God is a lighthouse for the world. Visualize every evening for a few minutes – *I am an angel of goodness and strength. I travel the entire world with God, radiating his light of qualities to everyone.*

10. Express your love to God before sleeping. Write a letter to him. Connect with him through different relationships and sleep in his lap of the light of love, completely secure and protected from the world's negativity.

To make use of situations in a positive way is to experience constant progress.

Expression: Each and every situation comes with a hidden blessing – a hidden opportunity. It of course brings challenges, challenges that could bring out the best potential from within. But the one who is caught up with only weaknesses never gets a chance to use these challenging situations as opportunities. On the other hand, the one who uses his potential is able to be from his weaknesses also.

Experience: When I am able to use all situations as opportunities to recognize and use my inner potential, I am able to be free from the MEDITATION IS THE ONLY WAY TO BRING UP YOUR CONNECTION TO YOUR HIGHER POWER AND COMBINE YOUR ETERNAL GIFTS OF LOVE, PEACE, HAPPINESS, WISDOM, AND PURITY.

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While I no longer have a seat on the dais, I am continuing to follow issues and information not covered by local news media. So, periodically, whenever I come across information of interest or not covered by the Sun Sentinel, or if you don't subscribe to the City updates, or whenever I feel like posting, I'll fill in the gaps when there's important news and information.

For starters: There was a very interesting item on the Commission's Dec. 2 Agenda.

The question was, "Should a certificate of demolition be issued for the SunTrust Bank building?"

The Issue: this was the first bank building built in Broward, built by none other than our city's founder, Joe Young, starting in 1927. It was a truly magnificent structure, but renovations in the '40's, 60's, 90's sacrificed all of the elements that made the building iconic. The bank is in the Historic District, although neither the State or Federal governments have granted it as an historic designation.

An eight-story mixed use building has been proposed for the site wrapping around to Tyler and then west to 21st Avenue. **The Hollywood Historic Preservation Board** unanimously voted in opposition to issuing the demolition order, but this moved to the Commission.

The Board's position, which I completely understand, is that we cannot surrender any more of our history while conceding there was virtually nothing physically left to restore, just history and tradition.

The issue went to the Commission as "quasi-judicial," meaning the session ran as a legal proceeding. Speakers would be sworn in; there would be cross examination, a court reporter and very strict rules that required the Commission's decision be based on specific criteria. While residents could comment and be subject to cross examination, the Commission could only base their decision on the relevant facts.

The City's position was that the decision had to be based on eight criteria. Each member was to identify which of (or all of) the eight criteria they were using in their decision making.

After five hours (until 10 pm), the order for demolition will be issued. Next step will be a presentation of the site plan, which, if approved, will allow the demolishing to proceed.

The sticking point for several Commissioners was their belief that the new building should preserve at least some of the unique elements of the building. But the fact is there are not any unique elements and the structure cannot support the additional proposed five stories.

To me, this is a solid decision, consistent with our recent approval of the University Station development on the shuffleboard courts (generally); the anticipated redevelopment of Hollywood Blvd from the RR tracks to City Hall; and the \$8 million streetscape project in the Historic District.

The proposed project will be rental apartments, higher than market rate, with retail on the ground. The MAIN FEATURE would be The Vault; a ground floor restaurant featuring the original bank vault. I have seen it, and it is pristine and amazing.

Kudos to Mayor Levy for his very effective management of this contentious item. Be aware, it will probably be two years before permits are issued.

Next time I get the urge, the subject will be "Septic to Sewer" and YES, this is really Important!

Sincerely,

Dick

Like what you are reading? Want to discuss these issues and more? Here is how you can contact Dick Blattner personally:

By email: dick@dickblattner.com

By phone: 954-558-0175

By regular mail: 3501 Keyser Ave. #48, Hollywood, FL 33026

HILLCREST COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE/PARKVIEW AT HILLCREST UPDATE



Our Hillcrest Compliance Committee is continuously on top of what is going on with the daily happenings regarding the redevelopment which is the Pulte project called Parkview at Hillcrest. Special kudos to **Betty Merk**, who continues to amaze me with her dedication even though she is still in Canada and to **Dr. George Jacobson**, a former resident of Hillcrest 4 who is now a Parkview homeowner who makes it a habit to walk the property and note the issues. The Committee would like to extend a big THANK YOU to those Hillcresters who also walk the property and write in when they see something that needs to be repaired or remedied. Here is the latest update:

The fence contractor has walked the property and informed us that they have fixed all the caps, gate swings and locks. There is only one missing panel still outstanding that will be completed shortly behind the low rises.

Daniel Lemus, our Pulte liaison, met with the landscaper and the dead trees in the park have been noted and will be removed and replaced. The lighting to the 3 Hillcrest entrances are being worked on. The delay is due to finding the power source. This issue has not been forgotten and will be dealt with.

The benches (15 total) for the park had a long lead time and will be received by end of December and installed early in the new year. The location of the second Gazebo, which was in question, has now been resolved. It will be built behind the school yard close to Parkview, in the ring. It will take a few months.

If you notice anything or have any questions/concerns about the Parkview at Hillcrest project, please email hillcrestleadershipcouncil@comcast.net and your correspondence will be forwarded to the Hillcrest Compliance Committee.



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Richard L. Skeen
 LL.M. Taxation

Licensed: Florida & Ohio
 Main office:
 2450 Hollywood Blvd. Suite 105
 Hollywood, Florida 33020

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