



Community News Update

April 2023



President's Message

DSCA Residents and Friends:

Over 100 residents of the Downtown Sarasota Condominium Association (DSCA) recently gathered for an informative and engaging Town Hall meeting on April 4th. The event aimed to provide the latest updates on issues important to downtown residents, such as new construction, noise, police presence, and homelessness, while also creating opportunities for residents to provide their input on matters being considered by city staff and the city commission.

The panel discussion was moderated by Jon Thaxton and featured panelists David Lough (DSCA president), Richard Harris (CCNA President), Julie Ryan (General Manager of the Downtown Improvement District), and Dede Jones (Homeless Response Outreach Coordinator). The panelists provided insights and answered questions through a PowerPoint presentation and an open-floor discussion. Topics and questions covered noise, sidewalk cleanliness, staging plans for new construction, pedestrian safety, homelessness, park improvements, etc.

Notable city officials including Steve Cover, Director of Planning, Lucia Panica, Director of Developmental Services, Doug Jeffcoat, Director of Public Works and Police Chief Rex Troche were also present at the event. This makes for a unique opportunity for city staff to learn of questions and concerns being raised by attendees as well as a chance to engage residents in the community.

The Town Hall meeting also served as an occasion to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the DSCA. Originally established in 1998 as the Bayfront Condominium Association, the DSCA has since grown and evolved into the Downtown Sarasota Condominium Association in 2006. Images of DSCA's special cake follow...and, yes, the entire condo building is a cake!

The Town Hall provided a great opportunity for our panelists to provide residents with important updates and a platform to share their concerns with city officials, while also celebrating the DSCA's 25 years of service to the community. For those who were not able to attend, links to the PowerPoint slides used at the Town Hall and a video recording of the event can be found at the links below and the DSCA website.

Thank you for your continued support of the DSCA and our community.

David Lough
DSCA President





DSCA Board Members: Jamie Still, Catherine Sellers and Peter Fanning



Moderator Jon Thaxton,
Panelist, David Lough, Richard Harris,
Dede Jones, and Julie Ryan

View April 4, 2023 Town Hall Meeting Video [HERE](#)

View Town Hall Presentation Slides [HERE](#)

DSCA Annual Members Meeting Wrap Up

Prior to the DSCA Town Hall, the annual members' meeting covered some intriguing "Fast Facts" and showcased some of the DSCA's 2022 accomplishments. Some highlights include statistics about downtown population growth, new construction, and real estate trends. In 2022, the DSCA was instrumental in providing meaningful neighborhood impact regarding zoning, city parks and streetscapes. Some key initiatives for this upcoming year include follow through with current projects, improving the quality of life for downtown residents and ensuring downtown population growth is an appropriate factor in the city's planning. Click on the link for the PowerPoint presentation for more information.

View April 4, 2023, Annual Meeting [HERE](#)

View Annual Meeting Presentation Slides [HERE](#)

Homelessness - Health & Safety

The Homeless situation is continuing to improve for those persons without homes and the residents and visitors who interact with them downtown. There are multiple agencies in our county making life better for persons without homes and, reduces their need to be on the street. Want to see for yourself? Click on this address <https://resourceguide.making-an-impact.org/>, then click on Sarasota County and then, as an example, Housing & Shelter Assistance. Also, please note that we use the term "Persons Without Homes, to emphasize the number one reason people are homeless -- they don't have a HOME!

Deidre (Dee Dee) Jones is the Coordinator of Homelessness Response for the City of Sarasota and is a good point of contact if you have a concern or question and is especially receptive of calls from anyone "who sees something and wants to say something." Dee recently participated on the panel at the DSCA's Annual Meeting on April 4. Dee's mobile phone is (941) 248-5940 and her office number is (941) 263-6302. REMEMBER THESE contact numbers are for NON-EMERGENCY SITUATIONS. If you need IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE, call **911**.

The Salvation Army remains an excellent resource that provides shelter and programs for people who are without homes or shelter at no cost. Once a person comes through the doors of the Salvation Army, they are immediately eligible for shelter, and upon registering to participate in one of the several programs at the Salvation Army their shelter experience is upgraded, and they may remain at the Salvation Army until they can move on to more permanent housing.

Sarasota Police Department Updates



Feeling Safer? The Sarasota Police Department (SPD) held a ceremony late last month to swear in ten new officers. On top of this 17 additional Officers are currently attending the SPD Police Academy with graduation planned late this summer. The addition of these 27 new officers will increase the SPD patrol officer force by 20%.

Eight of new officers are intended to provide additional foot patrol coverage downtown and the Rosemary District. The new officers will likely require another 4-6 months of training, but they will be out and about with an experienced officer sometime later this year. If you see an officer or two strolling along Main Street or one of the other downtown thoroughfares, make sure you say hello and tell them how much you appreciate seeing them making our community a safer and more pleasant place.

Want to know more about what's happening at SPD? Tune into a Podcast, "Chat With The Chief" at www.buzzsprout.com/2162783. Chief Troche initiated this effort to increase SPD contact with the community. The Podcasts may also be accessed on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Pandora, iHeart Radio, Amazon Music, You Tube and more. The first episode of this new podcast, All About the Traffic Unit and Roundabouts, is available now. Sergeant Frangioni and Officer Beskin chat with Chief Troche. You will definitely be interested in this chat – Believe Me!!

Here's one last note for those who have shared their opinions regarding the SPD lack of enforcement activity. During the week of April 6 -12, the SPD reported: a summons issued, "Unlawful Storage of Property" – likely a person without a home – Resurrection House might be able to help. Twelve "Trespass Warnings" were issued, likely all to people who may be trying to find shelter

or some sort – this type of police contact is not to punish and often leads to identifying a person in need of help through the Hot Teams, Salvation Army, and Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness. Three summonses were issued for “Unlawful Lodging Outdoors.” Again, this is not to punish a person without a home but is used to help the person gain appropriate lodging or shelter. TRUE: some of these people will continue to choose a different lifestyle, but some will take advantage of the several services available to them once they are identified and connected to a service system.

Arts and Cultural

The Public Art Committee is considering 3 possible sculptures for the Fruitville roundabout after the City Commission decided against the previous artwork recommended by the PAC.

The City Commission has granted an extension until November 30, 2024, for the Sarasota Performing Arts Center Foundation to submit a proposed Implementation Agreement to it for signing between the two entities re: a new performing arts hall. This agreement has been delayed because the City staff needed to revise the City's purchasing rules which took a lot of time and delayed the creation of the Architect Selection Task Force, a proposed site plan and a proposed construction budget among a number of other things which were planned to be a part of the Implementation Agreement.

Getting Around

DSCA Transportation Updates

Main Street redesign and funding

Significant development on upper Main Street, along with Legacy Trail access, will require rethinking appropriate improvements before seeking additional funding. The Main Street Complete Streets project limits have been updated to be from Gulfstream Ave to School Ave. While funding for planning and part of the design is currently funded, the city is seeking additional funding to complete the design and construction. In addition, the city is coordinating with developers from the Parks District to add a Legacy Trail connector on East Ave which would connect Ringling Trail to East Ave, other Trails and Complete Streets projects planned for the area.

Intersection of 41 and Blvd of the Arts pedestrian crossing

Unfortunately, due to a high demand for replacing lighting in hurricane-damaged areas to the south, a newly enhanced pedestrian lighting system has been on order and will be delayed. According to the FDOT vendor, the sign should be delivered in May 2023.

Gulfstream Roundabout Update

As many of our members may have noticed, seasonal traffic is up 20 to 30% from last year. Currently tourism is being redirected from areas down south that suffered have tourism infrastructure destruction.

Some good news is that wait times from St. Armand's through the Gulfstream Roundabout has been significantly reduced because of efficiency of roundabouts over traffic signals. Before COVID there were occasional two-hour delays between St. Armand's and Gulfstream. These have now been reduced to 30 minutes or less during peak hours.

Pedestrian HAWK Lights for the Gulfstream roundabout and Ritz Drive to 1st Street are scheduled to begin operation at the end of May and the Gulfstream roundabout landscaping is scheduled for autumn.



Gulfstream Roundabout Webcam

Intermittent work on the roundabout area continues. This work is a moving target. Week by week things are improving.

[Marina Tower Roof](#)
([Marina Tower Roof](#))_|_Nest

NOTE - once the link loads, hover over the image and click on the play (>) button.

DSCA Board April Wrap Up

The 4/5 DSCA Board meeting was held via Zoom. Following is a link to the full board meeting.

View Meeting Video [HERE](#) - DSCA Board Meeting 2023-04-05

DSCA Upcoming Events

DSCA Board Meeting

DSCA Board Meeting | May 3, 2023 | 4:00 PM – 5:30 p.m. held via Zoom & Broadway Promenade, 1064 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34236

Guest Speakers: Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

- Nicole Mills, Interim Director of Transportation Development
- Keith Robbins (District Safety Administrator)
- Bessie Reina (District Planning Manager)

DSCA Board Meetings are for Board Directors, with designated Condo Member Representatives, Liaison Association Representatives and invited Guests attending as observers. Contact President, David Lough (760) 497-9230, if you wish to be invited.

Associate Member Events

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT YOUR EVENT](#)

Upcoming Community Events

Fresh Friday's



SIP-SHOP-STROLL | Downtown Sarasota, Lemon Ave and Main Street

May 5th, 5-8 p.m. The Sarasota Downtown Merchants First Friday event runs along the 1400, 1500, 1600 blocks of Main Street, Palm Ave., 1st & 2nd Street. The event is open to the public. Stroll trendy fashion boutiques, art galleries, experience wine tastings, and live music throughout Main Street. Tourists and locals, even the occasional celebrity, enjoy caricatures as the perfect souvenir, something hand-drawn and one of a kind.

Visit DestinationDowntownSarasota.com to learn more.

JAZZ ON THE AVE | May 5th, 6-9 p.m. | Palm Avenue hosts a monthly Art Walk. Browse the fine art galleries, jewelers, and restaurants of Palm Avenue while enjoying dancing, live music, and refreshments. This has been one of the traditional ongoing monthly events in Sarasota for many years. Visit [Palm Avenue in Downtown Sarasota for more details.](#)

FIESTA FRESCA – A FRESH TAKE ON CINCO DE MAYO | May 5th, 7-10 p.m.

On May 5th, the freshest party around will be a lively night celebrating Mexican culture, this time on Palm Avenue adjacent to the Art Ovation Hotel with live music from former American Idol finalist, Jonathon Cortez, and specialty Cinco de Mayo beverages and light bites from select downtown restaurants, and more! Visit DestinationDowntownSarasota to learn more.

Rosemary District



Earth Day Celebration @The Bay Park | Saturday, April 22, 2023 12 PM - 2 PM Join RADD for an Earth Day Celebration Tabling Event at The Bay Park located at 1055 Blvd of the Arts, Sarasota. The event will take place at 12pm and will offer an interactive, hands-on experience aimed at creating a positive impact on our planet. Come and engage with like-minded individuals, learn about innovative sustainable practices, and enjoy exploring ways to make a difference. [Click here for more details.](#)

Check out the latest news and events happening in the Rosemary District, a blend of modern culture, food and activities you can schedule your whole day around. [Click here to view Rosemary District Events](#)

The Bay Park Conservancy

Sarasota's bayfront is an iconic, public destination that welcomes the diversity of Sarasota, enhances our status as a cultural capital and serves as a venue for multi-generational, inter-neighborhood, broad-based enjoyment of our bayfront.

[Click to view the updates from The Bay Park Conservancy](#)

[Click to view The Bay Park - Calendar of Events](#)

We Are Downtown Sarasota Residents partnering with Businesses!

Are your neighbors receiving our emails? ***Help your neighbors stay connected and forward this email to downtown condo residents!*** Click here to [subscribe here](#).

SUBSCRIBE



FOLLOW



FOLLOW



This message was sent to you by {Organization_Name}.
If you no longer wish to receive these emails, you can [unsubscribe](#) at any time

PO Box 3136, Sarasota, FL 34230
1-941-357-6224, <https://downtownsarasotacondoassoc.com/>