



Community News Update

March 2024



President's Message

Dear Members,

Sarasota was fortunate to have the [Architecture Sarasota Speakers Series](#) that took place January and February. This four-event series featured talks from three nationally renowned Urban Planners and a futurist, offering valuable perspectives on Sarasota's past, present, and potential future, as well as best practice examples from other cities. Each speaker provided insightful viewpoints. Links to all four presentations on YouTube are provided below. They are all very much worth watching; personally, I found the lecture by Mitchell Silver particularly interesting.

Don't forget to register for our upcoming DSCA Workshop on March 20th - [Sensible, Smart and Sustainable Development Shaping Downtown Sarasota in 2024 and Beyond](#). We'll be diving deeper into the topics covered in the speaker series. Further information about this Workshop is provided below.

Following the DSCA Workshop, on Wednesday, April 3rd, we will be holding our Annual Members Meeting, Board Meeting and Town Hall. The Town Hall event is planned around the topic recommended by Mitchell Silver on **“Placemaking for People”**, to enable our residential members to help reimagine and shape the future of our public realm downtown.

During our recent board meeting, Mary Bensel, Executive Director of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, shared important insights into the center's past improvements and future plans. She discussed necessary updates, including enhancements to the sound system and lighting. Mary also addressed the challenges of seating capacity in today's performing arts landscape and its impact on ticket pricing. Additionally, she highlighted how the vision for both the Van Wezel and a new performing arts center are being considered at the same time. I highly recommend watching her informative 40-minute presentation, and viewing her slides of exciting possible future uses for the facility. The Van Wezel and the prospect of a new performing arts center are crucial topics for our community, and I encourage you all to stay informed.

The City's transportation department is currently planning for the future of Main Street. A task force has been established to ensure that all stakeholders' input is considered. A hands-on workshop is scheduled for April 2nd, and a survey is underway with link to this following. This is a great effort to further enhance the charm and significance of Main Street.

Wishing you all a successful 'peak of season' with minimal traffic headaches.

David Lough

DSCA President

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DowntownSarasotaCondoAssoc.com

DSCA March Workshop

DSCA March Workshop - Wednesday, March 20, 2024

4:00 PM – 7:00 PM | @ Church of the Redeemer, Goewey Hall, 222 S Palm Ave Ste B, Sarasota, FL, 34326

For More Information and to Register



DSCA DOWNTOWN SARASOTA CONDO ASSOCIATION

20 MARCH 20, 2024

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER: DSCA'S WORKSHOP ON SENSIBLE, SMART, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- Bridging Ideas to Action: What's Next for Sarasota?
- Building on Urban Planners' Critique
- Anticipating and Managing 30% Downtown Growth

@ GOEWY HALL
222 S PALM AVE STE B
SARASOTA, FL 34236

REGISTER



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Architecture Sarasota Speaker Series

Downtown Sarasota: Hindsight, Insight, and Foresight

The [Architecture Sarasota Speaker Series](#) was a thought-provoking exploration of the evolution and future trajectory of downtown Sarasota. Through a series of engaging presentations by distinguished speakers such as Andrés Duany, David Houle, Mitchell Silver, and Victor Dover, the series delved into crucial topics ranging from the historical context of Sarasota's master plan to the macro-level forces shaping the city's development. Each speaker brought a unique perspective and expertise, offering valuable insights into effective urban planning practices and sustainable town development. By fostering informed discussions and providing a platform for community engagement, the series aimed to spark meaningful conversations about the past, present, and future of downtown Sarasota, ultimately shaping the vision for a vibrant and sustainable urban landscape.

Click on the links below to watch the video presentations by each of the speakers:

1. Andrés Duany: Hindsight: [How did we get here?](#)
2. David Houle: Insight, Part 1: [Where are we now?](#)
3. Mitchell Silver: Insight Part 2: [What are best practices from other communities?](#)
4. Victor Dover: Foresight: [How do we move forward?](#)

Downtown Development

New projects...back in modified form

Two significant condominium projects for downtown are once again under consideration and in the news, both in modified form. The first, formerly known as Obsidian, is now moving forward as '1260 Palm' with a slightly shorter proposed height and more habitable and retail space on the first and second floors. This project is scheduled for initial consideration by the City's Development Review Committee (DRC) on April 3rd.

Similarly, the application for One Park condominiums at 1100 Boulevard of the Arts is back for required city approvals. The project, now planned as a single tower with 86 units, has received initial comments on its plans from city staff

and is expected to return for further consideration by the DRC, likely in during the middle of April. Click [here](#) for more information.

Arts & Cultural

Mary Bensel, who has managed the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall for the last 17 years gave an important talk to our March 6th Board Meeting. Mary has extensive experience managing public and non-profit performing arts halls and turned a money losing auditorium into a money maker for the City of Sarasota during her tenure.

Mary reported on a number of issues adversely affecting the hall currently because of structural and design problems with the existing building. Major among those concerns is salt water intrusion causing extensive damage in basement areas of the building because of continuing sea level rise adjacent to the hall. She also discussed how technological sound, lighting and set production changes in touring shows as well as the size of such shows has created problems off-stage for the Van Wezel because of size restrictions.

Reuse of the Van Wezel, once a new performing arts hall is built, was also covered with Mary providing much food for thought about possible alternative uses for the building. No specific proposals were made, but a number of interesting ideas were described to stimulate discussion about the future of the existing auditorium. The Van Wezel Purple Ribbon Task Force will likely be considering these and many other ideas as they move toward a recommendation to the City Commission and staff for the future of the building.

Link to Mary Bensel's presentation: Click [here](#)

Link to Mary Bensel's PowerPoint Slides: Click [here](#)

Health and Safety





In the latest updates from our community, we're proud to spotlight the significant achievements of the Sarasota Police Department (SPD). Recent statistics reveal a significant decrease in Part 1 Crimes, This is the first time since 1967 there have been no recorded homicides, showcasing the SPD's commitment to our safety. Their swift response during critical situations, such as a recent boat rescue incident, exemplifies their professionalism and dedication.

Furthermore, the SPD's collaboration with the Downtown Community Watch Program underscores their proactive approach to community engagement and crime prevention. We extend our sincere gratitude to the SPD for their unwavering commitment to keeping our community safe. Their efforts truly make a difference in our daily lives. Click [here](#) to read more.

The SPD's **2023 Crime Statistics** summary data and slide presentation are available here:

[2023 Crime Statistics](#)

For those of you who would like to watch the presentation and hear the more in-depth questions from commissioners and answers with specific examples, watch the online video beginning with Agenda item II.1 (at 47:17 minutes):

[Presentation](#)

Getting Around

Main Street Survey

The community is invited to participate in an [online survey](#) about Main Street in downtown Sarasota and how to improve parking, driving, walkability and overall aesthetics for one of the most popular destinations in the city.

The Main Street Complete Streets project is in the early planning phase as the City looks to create a safer, visually pleasing, and more connected Main Street between U.S. 41 and School Avenue. We'd like to hear from you on how to improve the area! The online survey is available now through Friday, April 12 on

the [project webpage](#).

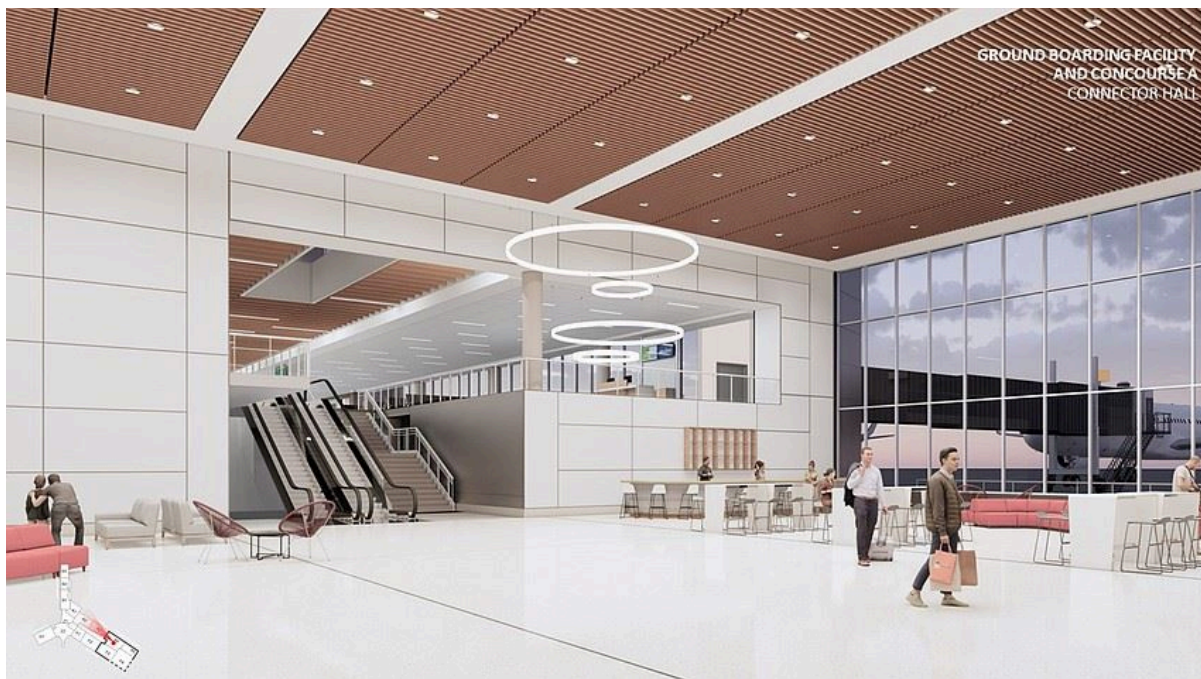
The planning phase to redesign Main Street started when the project was identified as the eighth priority in Sarasota's Transportation Master Plan, Sarasota in Motion, in 2019. Several opportunities for citizen engagement and involvement will be incorporated into the visioning process, including surveys, public events and more.

For more information contact the project manager, Alvimarie Corales, Chief Transportation Planner at Alvimarie.Corales@SarasotaFL.gov

Main Street Complete Streets Visioning Workshop is planned for April 2, at 5:00pm at the Selby Public Library. Details will be forthcoming next week.

Take Survey

Sarasota-Bradenton airport positioned for major growth



Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport (SRQ) has experienced remarkable growth in recent years, tripling its passenger count from 2017 to 2023 without expanding its gates. This surge is attributed to efficient gate management and technology utilization. As demand continues to rise, SRQ is undergoing significant expansion, including the construction of new concourses and gates. The airport's self-sustaining model, driven by various revenue streams, supports its ambitious growth plans. Additionally, SRQ plays a vital role in the local economy, providing thousands of jobs and generating billions in economic impact. With ongoing capital projects and anticipated improvements,

SRQ is poised for further development to meet the needs of travelers and the region. SRQ keeps growing to meet current and expected demand. Click [here](#) to read more and to see the math on what makes it go.

Rosemary District



At the recent quarterly community meeting hosted by the Rosemary District Association on March 6th, several important matters were discussed, including the delay in building Rosemary Park. Subsequently, earlier this week, a building permit was issued, signaling potential progress in construction, although the timeline remains uncertain.

Additionally, two new restaurant owners were introduced, who shared insights about their establishments. Parking issues and updates on the old Colson Hotel building were also discussed during the meeting.

DSCA Board March Wrap Up

As has been the recent practice, the March 6 DSCA Board meeting was held in hybrid fashion, both in person at the Broadway Promenade Club Room and via Zoom. Following are links to the full Board meeting and guest speaker presentation.

Guest Speaker: Mary Bensel - Executive Director of Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

View full meeting video: [Click here](#)

View speaker meeting video: [Click here](#)

Mary Bensel's PowerPoint Slides: [Click here](#)

Get Involved - Make a Difference

Tallahassee's Solution: At a press conference, Monday, February 5, Governor DeSantis endorsed the **present efforts by the State Legislature** to criminalize certain behaviors of people without homes. He also said, he is "open to providing financial support" to local governments for sheltering the homeless and providing them treatment for mental health problems and substance abuse. Of the legislation passed and sent on to for the Governor's signature, the one that likely may have greatest impact is titled: "Unauthorized Public Camping and Public Sleeping." If the Governor signs, and it is likely, it will take effect October 1, 2024.

There are some with the opinion that this legislation will be challenged and found to be out of compliance with other similar efforts to focus restrictions of a constitutionally protected behavior, and therefore unenforceable. There are others who say that the State by holding local jurisdictions responsible for the provisions in the Bill can avoid the Constitution question by providing adequate money and resources to implement the provisions this Bill. Time will tell. Click [here](#) to read more.

DSCA Upcoming Events

DSCA Annual Members Meeting

Wednesday, April 3, 2024 | 4:00 – 7:00pm

@ Fogartyville Community Center

525 Kumquat Ct, Sarasota, Florida 34236

4:00pm - DSCA Annual Members Meeting -

Download Agenda: [DSCA Annual Members Agenda 20240403.pdf](#)

Download Minutes 2023 Members Meeting: [DSCA Annual Members Minutes- 20230404-DRAFT-v2.pdf](#)

4:30pm - DSCA Board Organizing Meeting Agenda

5:00pm - DSCA Town Hall - Placemaking for People

6:30pm - Members Reception

Associate Member Events

Upcoming Community Events

Fresh Fridays



Fresh Fridays | Dance Dance Downtown Sarasota | April 5th | 7 - 10 PM

Fresh Fridays invites you to strut your stuff downtown for a night of unadulterated dancing. On April 5th, from 7-10 p.m., we are at a new location on Main Street, between N Palm Ave and S Pineapple Ave, for a block party where you can move and groove to live music from [Society Hill](#), power up with fresh fuel from local restaurants, and experience the dance revolution that's sweeping downtown!

Please LIKE and Follow @[DowntownSarasotaDID](#) to show your appreciation for the Downtown Improvement District's incredible work funding and creating Fresh Fridays events! - Remember, "The DID did it! Click [here](#) for more information.

Jazz in the Park | Sunday, March 17th | 12 PM - 4 PM

The annual Sarasota Jazz Festival opens on March 17 with Jazz in the Park on the Civic Green by the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium. Entertainment features three bands, Booker High School Jazz Ensemble, Pete BarenBregge Band and Synia Carroll Quartet. Noon to 4 pm. Gates open 11:30 am. Tickets \$15, Discount for Jazz Club members . Visit: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/jazz-in-the-park-tickets-767554515217>

2nd Annual Downtown Sarasota Fine Art and Craft Fair

Experience the Downtown Sarasota Fine Art Fair, presented by Howard Alan Events, back for its second season! Explore Main Street's heart and discover life-size sculptures, paintings, jewelry, photography, and ceramics from talented artists nationwide. Meet the creators, learn about their inspirations, and enjoy a vibrant craft and green market. By attending, you support the Downtown Sarasota Alliance and local businesses. Join us for this celebration of art, culture, and community! Click [here](#) for more information.

Palm Avenue's First Friday Walks | First Friday of each month | 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Enjoy gallery openings, dining, antiques, specialty shops and live performances as members of the Palm Avenue Arts Alliance sing, dance, stroll and serenade the community and its guests. Click [here](#) for more information.

Sarasota Farmers Market | Every Saturday | 7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

One of the traditional weekly, year round events in Sarasota, you'll find everything from fresh produce, food, flowers and plants to arts and crafts, friends and fun, it's a community happening! Gathering among friends and even bring your dogs to check out the fresh produce and other unique things to browse upon. Main Street and Lemon Avenue in downtown Sarasota. Click [here](#) for more information.

Towles Court Artwalk | Third Friday of the Month / Oct-May | 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

All remain open for their enchanting THIRD FRIDAY ART WALKS with free music, events, and refreshments monthly. Towles Court is often referred to as "Sarasota's hidden treasure" because of its natural beauty and prevalence of unique artistry. Towles Court Artist Community is a colorful collection of "Old Florida" bungalows that house galleries and studios and cafes. It is a family-friendly event. Just three blocks south of Main St. between Washington Blvd and Osprey Ave. 1938 Adams Lane, Sarasota, FL.
More info: (941) 955-4546

The Bay Park Conservancy

The Bay Park | Calendar of Events

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.

[View the updates from The Bay Park Conservancy](#)

[View The Bay Park - Calendar of Events](#)

Rosemary District

Rosemary District | Calendar of Events

The Rosemary District is Sarasota's vibrant heart, blending history, art, and community. It's a dynamic public space where diverse generations and neighborhoods come together to celebrate our city's cultural revival and heritage.

[View the Rosemary District Upcoming Events](#)

If you missed any of our newsletters [Click here](#) to view past issues to share with your condo community

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