

Vice Mayor Romney Rogers, Commissioner, District IV



A Waterpark in Our Future! After presenting its concept to the City Commission on June 15th, Schlitterbahn, touted as America's First Family of Waterparks (<http://www.schlitterbahn.com>), was selected from a pool of four applicants proposing to redevelop Fort Lauderdale Stadium. Schlitterbahn's idea is to build a multi-use, multi-sport family recreation destination with lodging and retail. The \$110 million construction project would create jobs and generate revenue for the city, while not relying on any city funding. The stadium would be preserved and integrated into the development. Schlitterbahn will work with the city and county to move its proposal forward.

Budget: On July 7th we approved the City Manager's Proposed FY2010/2011 Budget. The "bottom line" is that taxes won't increase and vital city services won't decrease. We will draw from the city's cash reserves, eliminate vacant positions, and make other cuts to cover the anticipated shortfall. Our reserves are two to three times greater than required by city policy and are above the national standard for local governments, even after the drawdown.

Neighborhood Development Criteria Revisions (NDCR): City staff will be presenting its draft NDCR at the Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Board meeting at 6:30 p.m. on July 21st in City Hall. Several workshops and open houses have already been held, and citizen input on the NDCR draft is still being received. The City Commission will consider the amended plan in Fall 2010. See http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/ndcr.htm to learn more.

South Andrews Zoning Ordinance: On June 28th, Mayor Seiler and I participated in a public meeting, convened by P&Z staff, on the proposed South Regional Activity Center – South Andrews Zoning Ordinance. The goal of the ordinance is to transform an under-used resource – South Andrews Avenue, the historic spine of the city – into a pedestrian-friendly urban corridor with a mix of uses serving nearby neighborhoods and the hospital district. An outgrowth of the 2004 Master Plan for this area, the ordinance sets a vision with a 20-year build-out scenario. This hybrid of zoning regulation and design standards will facilitate permitting and offer greater flexibility in design. Comments are welcome. See http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/planning_zoning/south_andrews_masterplan.htm.

Walk-Thru Permitting: On the subject of permitting, approximately 20 percent of all building permit applications are now being processed through the city's Walk-Thru program. This represents about 20 permits per day or 400 each month. The average time it takes to approve a Walk-Thru permit varies from 10 to 15 minutes for an applicant with all documentation to roughly 30 minutes or so, if a homeowner lacks adequate knowledge of how to complete the process. The city works with these homeowners so they can obtain their permit quickly.

Signs: At my request, the City Commission asked the Economic Development Advisory Board to review our sign ordinance from the business-community perspective and to suggest ideas for making it a bit more "business friendly." We then discussed the Board's recommendations at our June 15th meeting and asked the City Attorney to find ways to allow certain limited and/or temporary signs promoting the cultural arts, such as banners and flags on light posts and other types of signage, while preserving the aesthetics of the community that the sign code seeks to protect. The City Attorney will report back to us with his recommendations.

Homeless Feeding: We have agreed to consider a site in an industrial area near Sunrise Boulevard for homeless feeding instead of the site near Holiday Park proposed earlier. We would also like to work with Broward County and the City of Hollywood to develop a more far-reaching solution to the homeless issue.

First Presbyterian Church: We have filled the vacancies on the P&Z Board, and the rezoning application of First Presbyterian Church is expected to be on the July 21st P&Z Board agenda.

Bahia Mar: The terms of the lease for the Bahia Mar project are still under negotiation. Once finalized, the new lease and Planned Unit Development Site Plan will be considered by the City Commission.

Las Olas Fencing: We are going to study options for replacing the unpainted aluminum guardrails that the Florida Department of Transportation has installed along Las Olas between SE 17th Avenue and Sunset Drive.

To serve on an advisory board: Please go to <http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/news/2010/061510boards.htm>.

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