

Scenic Watch

Citizens for a Scenic Florida



News May 2014



Photo: BizJournals.com - Philadelphia

UEDS - GIANT 3-D "Urban Experiential Displays"

"Legislation is being proposed to create a digital district in Center City [Philadelphia] that would permit electronic displays at seven locations within the boundaries of that area.

Called urban experiential displays, or UEDs, they would communicate advertising, news and public service announcements. These UEDs are also being proposed as a revenue generator for the city as well as a place making mechanism..."

This [article does include the promotional video \(here\)](#) showing an ad about what these sculptural billboards might look like while they are in operation.



Photos: BizJournals.com - Philadelphia

-- Natalie Kostelni, BizJournals - Philadelphia

[View promotional video and read entire article here>](#)

Events Around Our State



Fun Festivals and Events

Central Florida

May 17

Art of the Automobile, Daytona Beach

May 17

DeSoto County Watermelon Festival, Arcadia

May 17

Cruisin' Downtown DeLand Classic Car Show, DeLand

May 17-18

Downtown Sarasota Craft Festival, Sarasota

Through May 18

Epcot International Flower and Garden Festival, Lake Buena Vista

May 23

Fourth Fridays Art Walk, Sanford

May 24

Art Walk on Flagler, New Smyrna Beach

June 1 - June 14

Enforcement:

"Miami targets lone mural to go"



Photo: Miami Today

"Miami Commissioner Frank Carollo is convinced wall mural laws in the city are being selectively enforced. This belief played a role in a debate last week about an illegal wall mural in the shadow of I-95 and led to a testy exchange between Mr. Carollo and Commissioner Marc Sarnoff.

"My issue is: There is selective enforcement,' Mr. Carollo said.

At the end of lengthy discussion on the large sign, the commission voted 4-1 to take legal action to remove the mural. Mr. Carollo voted no.

The wall mural in question is a large sign on the back of a commercial building at 299 SW 17th Road, right beside the freeway. [Photo Above]...

Mr. Carollo asked a code enforcement representative how the city decides if a mural is illegal.

A code enforcement officer is sent out when complaints are made.

Savor Sarasota Restaurant Week,
Sarasota

June 2-21

Sarasota Music Festival, Sarasota

June 6

Jazz Friday at Fossaner Museum of
Art, Melbourne

June 6-7

Silver Spurs Rodeo, Kissimmee

June 7

First Saturday Jam, Barberville

June 7

World Oceans Day Family Festival,
Sarasota

June 7-8

Eighth Annual Pepper Fest, Pinellas
Park

June 7-8

Corey Avenue Craft Festival, St.
Petersburg Beach

June 12

Climb to the Moon, Ponce Inlet

June 13

Sunset Cruise, Crystal River

June 13

Friday Fest, Melbourne

June 14

Second Saturday Gamble Jam,
Flagler Beach

June 14 - 15

St. Armands Circle Craft Festival,
Sarasota

[Read more >](#)

South Florida

May 15-18

Key Largo Original Music Festival,
Key Largo

May 17

Battle in the Bay Dragon Boat
Festival, Marathon

May 16-18

Redland International Orchid Show,
Homestead

May 23-25

Miami International Piano Festival /
Discovery Series, Miami Beach

June 1

Suntrust Sunday Jazz Brunch, Fort
Lauderdale

June 5

Mr. Carollo asked several times if the mural was the only illegal one in the city.

“It is the only one we are aware of,” said the official, adding that all means have been exhausted to have the mural removed short of going to court against the property owner.

Mr. Carollo said enforcement is not proactive, it’s reactive, and the city has been “lax” in enforcement the past four years.

Mr. Sarnoff spoke of efforts in recent years to address large murals, noting at one time they numbered near 100. Through a dedicated mural program, he said, the city ended up with about 25 murals around I-95.

Sometimes enforcement of the mural rules isn’t easy, according to Mr. Sarnoff. The one at 299 SW 17th Road has survived many enforcement efforts to remove it, he said.

Mr. Sarnoff mentioned a situation involving another advertising sign placed on a building under construction during Art Basel last month. “We did everything in our power” to get the illegal sign removed for more than a month, he said, but it remained displayed with the building owner absorbing a fine of \$1,500 day.

As it turned out, the fine was a pittance compared to what the building owner was paid to host the illegal sign, according to commission Chairman Wifredo “Willy” Gort. It was just the cost of doing business, he said.

Mr. Sarnoff mentioned recent enforcement action against illegal murals. “There were six murals I called [code enforcement] on... they were able to bring down six,” he said. “This is the seventh,” he said of the 17th Road mural.

“I don’t want to see selective enforcement,” said Mr. Carollo. “I want to see a comprehensive resolution of all [illegal] murals.”

Mr. Carollo reiterated there are other existing illegal signs, and he asked for a complete list of murals.

“There are more... I want to have that list,” said Mr. Carollo.

He argued at length to defer action on the 17th Road mural to the next commission meeting in February, affording code enforcement staff time to list illegal murals.

Other commissioners supported going after other illegal signs, but said this one had to be dealt with.

Francis Suarez distinguished between code enforcement and code compliance.

“We can enforce until we’re blue in the face. To bridge the gap we need better enforcement and compliance,” he said. The city must take legal action against illegal murals and signs, including fines and arrest if necessary, to show that there will be consequences for illegal signs, he said.

“I believe there are more illegal murals out there,” Mr. Suarez said.

Mr. Carollo continued to push for postponing the case two weeks and having the code enforcement office list all murals and billboards and the status of any review and enforcement action on them.

“I don’t think you’re listening, candidly, I don’t think you’re listening...,” Mr. Sarnoff

Founder's Day at Whitehall, Palm Beach

June 14

West Palm Beach Carnival, West Palm Beach

June 15

Cars & Cigars at The Barnacle Historic State Park, Miami

[Read more >](#)

North Florida

May 16-18

Wild Amelia Nature Festival, Amelia Island

May 17

Newberry Watermelon Festival, Newberry

May 17

24th Annual Tupelo Honey Festival, Wewahitchka

May 23-25

Florida Folk Festival, White Springs

May 23-25

Jacksonville Jazz Festival, Jacksonville

May 23-26

Blue Crab Festival, Palatka

June 5 - June 6

Fiesta Day Parade, Pensacola

June 5- June 7

Billy Bowlegs Pirate Festival, Fort Walton Beach

June 6

First Friday Art Walk, St. Augustine

June 6 - 9

Shindig on the Sand 3-Day Music Festival, Pensacola

June 7

Wellborn Blueberry Festival, Wellborn

June 7

Watermelon Festival, Chiefland

June 7

Living History Day at Fort Matanzas, Marineland

June 7

Beach Bash at Anastasia State Park, St. Augustine

June 14

Artrageous Artwalk, Fernandina Beach

June 14

said to Mr. Carollo.

"I listen better than you think I do,' Mr. Carollo responded, raising his voice.

"I want to go citywide with this... Other areas are getting away with [illegal signs],' Mr. Carollo said.

Mr. Suarez, in a bid to calm discussion and resolve the item, suggested 'Why not enforce this one... and we can keep looking for the rest?'

'What would it hurt to wait until the next meeting?' Mr. Carollo persisted.

'It's been on the agenda for 18 months,' Mr. Sarnoff responded.

'We're missing the bigger picture... It's happening citywide and we're not going after them,' said a frustrated Mr. Carollo.

Mr. Sarnoff moved approval of legal action against the 17th Road mural along with a commission statement that it would 'take all action necessary' against illegal murals, billboards and signs. The motion requires the code enforcement office to keep an updated list of signs and the status of enforcement and report on that list bi-monthly to the commission.

Mr. Suarez said he liked the idea of a list discussed by Mr. Carollo and Mr. Sarnoff, saying it can be an 'accountability tool' as the city wrestles to control large signs.

After his 'no' vote on the mural, Mr. Carollo said he only disagreed with the 'timing,' believing the matter could have waited two weeks."

-- John Charles Robbins, Miami Today News

[Read entire article here>](#)

"Cape Coral council considers electronic billboards"



Photo: City of Cape Coral

"... The process is in its preliminary stages, but council will discuss details like what these [billboard/message] centers will look like, where they will go, how big they will be and how many messages will be shown. Councilmen Derrick Donnell,

Annual St. George Island Mullet Toss, St. George Island

June 14

National Gardens Week Walk at Washington Oaks, Palm Coast

June 14 - 15

Florida Country Superfest, Jacksonville

June 14 - 15

Seawalk Music Festival, Jacksonville

[Read more >](#)



Note from the Editor

Suggestions for improvement are always welcome.

John Carioscia and Rick Williams dissented saying this was an issue they wouldn't be able to control.

'It's a great concept, great idea; but this got so far away from what we intended it to be,' Donnell said.

Their fears are that the billboards would proliferate the city as A-frames and feather banners now dot Del Prado Boulevard. This comes on the tail-end of extensive and occasionally grueling discussion over the city's sign ordinance. With recent evolutions, A-frames have been restricted, and feather banners are now only allowed outside model homes.

'The larger issue are three simple questions,' said Cape Coral City Manager John Szerlag. 'Does the governing body want billboards? Do you want them limited? And by limiting them does that preclude us from stopping other billboards from coming in? If the answer is 'no,' discussion is over. If the answer is yes we can proceed to make components of an RFP.'

Department of Community Development Director Vince Cautero tried to clarify that staff felt these questions were important for council to ponder.

'You can't hide or stick your head in the sand, you can't say no or yes because you don't understand it,' said Councilman Jim Burch. 'We will be getting on a slippery slope but to sit up here now and say 'ehh, never mind'... Let's get the dialogue going, let's get these questions answered.'

Ed Bolter, general manager of Lamar Advertising, said over six years he's spoken to at least 15 council members and a couple of city managers. In October, Lamar proposed installing digital billboards at the main entrances to the city.

The current ordinance does not allow billboards on city property. "

-- Cristela Guerra, News-Press.com

[Read entire article here>](#)

Scenic Miami-Dade: Public views of Biscayne bay could be lost to soccer stadium as developers target public waterfront park



Photo: CBSlocal.com

"Referendum appears increasingly likely for David Beckham's proposed Miami soccer stadium "

"The longer David Beckham and his investors spend scouting publicly owned sites

for a potential Major League Soccer stadium in Miami, the more it looks like the group will have to go to at least some voters for eventual approval.

Miami Mayor Tomás Regalado said the city will require a referendum if Beckham's group settles on filling and then building on a city-owned deep-water basin, known as the Florida East Coast Railway slip, along Biscayne Boulevard...

Miami requires voter approval over plans for waterfront city property...

Regalado said he told Beckham and Fuller last week that he would not favor turning over a city-owned site, such as the FEC slip, to the county. Miami would also like to be reimbursed for the nearly \$12 million it has spent upgrading the slip, according to the mayor...

Building a stadium on the water basin would encroach on the neighboring Museum Park, which is owned by the city. The recently inaugurated Pérez Art Museum and under-construction Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science are both funded in part by the county... "

-- Patricia Mazzei, Miami Herald

[Read entire article here >](#)

"Miami ducking decision on illuminated signs"



Photo: Miami Today News

Repeated Deferrals

"More than two years in the making, a new and improved sign ordinance is headed for adoption by the Miami City Commission.

And while the commission approved the first reading of the new sign rules March 13, it put off a decision on one of the most controversial aspects having to do with illuminated signs, including LED signs...

Mr. Garcia stressed the changes don't cover wall murals or billboards, which fall under a separate ordinance.

But that didn't stop some in the audience from speaking out against billboards, while also lambasting the often glaringly bright LED signs scattered around the city.

Nathan Kurland said the 'flashing mess' of LED signs threatens to ruin the area's tropical beauty, and even stricter rules are needed to regulate the brightness of LEDs.

Some of the larger LED billboards can be seen up to 27 miles away, he said.

Mr. Kurland also said illegal billboards should be removed immediately at the owners' expense.

'We have enough illegal signage,' said Nancy Liebman of the MiMo Boulevard Association. She suggested neon lights instead of LED signs.

Ms. Liebman suggested the city's historic preservation board be involved in any talks about illuminated signage, especially considering the ongoing efforts to resurrect old motels, which relied on neon signs in the past.

Bob Powers also spoke in favor of neon lighting over LED-type signs. 'Neon is much more palatable to the eye,' he said.

Peter Ehrlich Jr., representing Scenic Miami [Dade], said the group isn't opposed to the basic aspects of the proposed ordinance. However, the group strenuously opposes electronic message signs.

They are 'damning and offensive,' he said.

Commissioner Francis Suarez commended the planning staff for its work on the sign ordinance.

'I support this effort. I believe it will make signs better looking,' said Mr. Suarez, who suggested leaving illuminated sign rules for another day.

The city has illuminated signs 'all over the place,' he said, and they're 'a mess' and 'ugly.'

Commissioner Keon Hardeman agreed to set aside the rules governing illuminated signs for a later debate. 'I want to tackle that head on,' he said.

Mr. Hardeman spoke of one LED sign in Miami Springs that was so bright 'it shocked me.' Illuminated signs certainly get your attention, he said, but with motorists taking their eyes off the road it becomes 'a huge safety issue.'

Commissioner Marc Sarnoff mentioned two LED-type signs along northbound US 1 near Coconut Grove, one touting the results of cosmetic surgery. He asked if those illuminated signs are legal.

'It is my contention they are not,' said Mr. Garcia.

Mr. Sarnoff asked if the planning department has done anything about those signs. Mr. Garcia said it has worked with code enforcement on them.

Mr. Sarnoff asked Mr. Garcia to report back to the commission on the extent of enforcement efforts regarding those two signs.

Commissioner Frank Carollo said 'it's selective enforcement,' a point he was trying to make earlier this year when commissioners debated removal efforts on a mural along I-95.

Mr. Garcia noted that the current sign ordinance prohibits flashing and animated signs."

-- John Charles Robbins, Miami Today News

[Read entire article here>](#)