

Scenic Watch

Citizens for a Scenic Florida



News June 2014

Increased Fines for Illegal Tree Cutting

Florida HB 1161 Signed Into Law by Governor on 6/20

"Effective July 1, 2014 HB1161 will become law. Among other changes it amended provisions relating to outdoor advertising signs.

Florida has increased the fines for illegal tree cutting related to billboard view zones.

Additionally the new legislation requires compliance with the Federal Highway Beautification act for billboards otherwise allowed on Water Management District Property.

Sadly, the new legislation is more explicit in allowing billboards in mixed use areas which include residential multifamily dwellings. Conceivably, this would include distracting changeable digital billboards visible from apartment and condo living rooms and bedrooms."

-- Bill Jonson, Scenic Florida President

[Read bill text, vote history and other detail here>](#)

Events Around Our State



Fun Festivals and Events

Central Florida

June 27 - 29

St Pete Pride Festival, St Petersburg

June 27

Fourth Fridays Art Walk, Sanford

Priceless views saved in Miami

"David Beckham's MLS stadium is a no-go at downtown Miami's Museum Park, boat slip"

June 28

Art and Wine Walk on Flagler Avenue, New Smyrna Beach

June 28

Art Walk on Flagler, New Smyrna Beach

June 28 - 29

Downtown Dunedin Craft Festival, Dunedin

June 28 - July 6

Suncoast Offshore Grand Prix Festival, Sarasota

July 3

Red Hot and Boom, Altamonte Springs

July 3

Old-Fashioned July Fourth Celebration, Winter Park

July 3

Red Hot and Boom, Altamonte Springs

July 3

Old-Fashioned July Fourth Celebration, Winter Park

July 4

Gulfport's Fourth of July Celebration, St Pete

July 4

Clearwater Celebrates America, Clearwater

July 4

Fourth of July Celebration, St Pete

July 5

St Pete Indie Market, St Petersburg

July 5-6

Second Annual Madeira Beach Craft Festival, Madeira Beach

July 25

Vans Warped Tour, St Petersburg

July 26

Mixon Fruit Farms Antiques, Arts and Crafts Fair, Bradenton



Photo: Crespogram.com

"Scenic Miami-Dade founders felt saving Museum Park from a 10 acre sports stadium was essential.

We were happy to assist neighbors and a plethora of local organizations to convince local politicians to respect the newly renovated Museum Park and the FEC Slip. Mayor Tomas Regalado was the pivotal public official at the City of Miami. He listened to residents and citizens."

-- Peter R. Ehrlich, Jr, Scenic Miami-Dade



Photos: Crespogram.com

" Less than a month after Miami-Dade County spurned a Major League Soccer stadium, the city of Miami did the same, telling David Beckham's investment group Tuesday that he cannot build on downtown's Museum Park and deep-water boat slip.

Mayor Tomás Regalado and City Manager Daniel Alfonso told Beckham's group thanks but no thanks when lead negotiator John Alschuler offered Miami \$2 million a year in rent of sorts to make a deal.

That was 'generous,' according to Alfonso, but neither he nor the mayor walked into the meeting with Alschuler intending to bargain. 'Given the uniqueness of this site, we agreed that this was just not the right place,' Alfonso said.

[Read more >](#)

South Florida

June 27

The Weekley Brothers Davie Pro Rodeo, Davie

July 4

Charlotte Harbor Freedom Swim, Punta Gorda

July 4

4th of July Fireworks Cruise, Sanibel Island

July 4

Red, White and Boom, Cape Coral

July 4

4th of July Celebration at Fishermen's Village, Punta Gorda

July 4

America's Birthday Bash, Miami

July 4

Fourth of July Celebration, Miami Beach

July 4

Red, White and Boom Celebration, Cape Coral

July 4

Old Fashioned Fourth at Flamingo Gardens, Davie

July 4

Salute to Independence, Boynton Beach

July 4

July Fourth Celebration, Delray Beach

July 4

Old-Fashioned Fourth of July Picnic at The Barnacle Historic State Park, Coconut Grove

July 4-6

Key Lime Pie Festival, Key West

July 5, 12, 19, 26

Third Street Farmers Market, Naples

July 6

Suntrust Sunday Jazz Brunch, Fort Lauderdale

July 18

Downtown Gallery Walk, Punta Gorda

July 9, 18, 23

Jupiter Lighthouse Sunset Tour, Jupiter

July 12

'The slip is off the table,' Regalado said...

Regalado, who was elected after opposing public financing for the Miami Marlins' ballpark in Little Havana, said numerous downtown residents — who are not known for being politically engaged — were loud in their opposition to the location.

'They have called, they have come, they have been very active,' he said. 'We listened.'

The mayor at first embraced the idea to fill the nine-acre boat slip, which was proposed by County Mayor Carlos Gimenez. A stadium would have encroached on 4.2 acres of Museum Park's 19 acres. Beckham's group would have landscaped the newly filled waterfront and connected it to the county-owned property behind AmericanAirlines Arena, known as Parcel B. That would have fulfilled a longtime promise to turn Parcel B into a public park, the investors said, and created new park land behind the stadium along Biscayne Bay...

'If asked by Major League Soccer and Miami Beckham United, my Administration will work to identify other possible sites in Miami-Dade County,' Gimenez said.

The Museum Park site had quickly drawn detractors. Condo residents worried about traffic congestion and losing their green space and bay views. High-profile architects and planners protested that Museum Park was intended to be an urban oasis — not a patch of dirt or water hole meant to be filled and developed.

Among the fiercest opponents was former city Mayor Manny Diaz, who during his administration had rejected putting a baseball stadium on the site. He praised Tuesday's decision, calling it 'the right choice.'

'I am hopeful that Mr. Beckham will consider other sites in our City and I am willing to help in any way I can,' he said in a statement.

Museum Park is scheduled to open Saturday. The Eagle, a U.S. Coast Guard training tall ship, will be docked at the water basin.

Regalado said he hopes Beckham's group finds another home for its stadium in Miami. 'Everybody here loves soccer,' he said..."

-- Patricia Mazzei, Miami Herald

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[Read Miami Herald article here>](#)

Ugly or art?

St. Petersburg plasters buildings with murals

Underwater Music Festival, Big Pine Key

July 12-13

International Mango Festival, Coral Gables

July 15-20

Hemingway Days, Key West

July 17

Third Thursday Art Walk, Islamorada

July 19-20

MangoMania Tropical Fruit Fair, Pine Island

[Read more >](#)

North Florida

June 26

Evenings in Olde Seville, Pensacola

June 27-28

Panhandle Watermelon Festival, Chipley

June 29

Plant-A-Poem Workshop and Reading, St Augustine

July 1-29

Bands on the Beach, Pensacola

July 2-6

International Billfish Tournament, Pensacola

July 3

Independence Day Fireworks Celebration, Apalachicola

July 3

Red, White and Blues, Ocala

July 4

Fourth of July Celebration, Jacksonville

July 4

Sertoma's 4th of July Celebration, Pensacola

July 4

Independence Day Fireworks, Pensacola

July 4

4th of July Spectacular, Panama City Beach

July 4

Salute to Freedom, Panama City



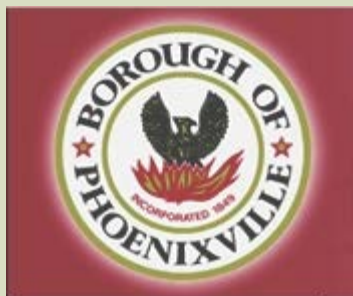
Photos: Tampa Bay Times

-- Tampa Bay Times

[See additional photos and read article here>](#)

Legal:

Judge dismisses challenge to zoning ordinance in billboard case



Phoenixville, PA

July 4

4th of July Concert & Fireworks, St Augustine

July 4

Stars & Stripes at the Sea Walk, Jacksonville Beach

July 4

First Friday Art Walk, St Augustine

July 4-5

Star Gazing on Pensacola Beach, Pensacola Beach

July 5

First Saturday Jam, Barberville

July 5-6

American Civil War, Amelia Island

July 11-12

Blue Angels Air Show, Pensacola

July 12

Artrageous Artwalk, Fernandina Beach

July 13

Summer Jazz Concert Series, Jacksonville Beach

July 18-19

Smokin' on the Suwannee BBQ Festival, Live Oak

[Read more >](#)

**Note from the Editor**

Suggestions for improvement are always welcome.

" A Chester County Common Pleas Court judge has dismissed a billboard baron's challenge to the Phoenixville zoning ordinance that he claimed improperly excluded his signs from the borough.

In a May 20 ruling, Judge Mark Tunnell upheld a Phoenixville Zoning Hearing Board decision that the borough's zoning ordinance does allow for billboards and other large outdoor signs to be erected, just not in the location that Thaddeus Bartkowski III and his company, Chester County Outdoor, wanted to erect three digital billboards.

Bartkowski had filed a substantive validity challenge to the ordinance in 2011, claiming it unconstitutionally prohibited his type of business from the borough. In 2012, the zoning board ruled against Bartkowski, finding that the types of signs he wanted to erect were a permitted use, even if they were not specifically identified.

'The clear and unambiguous language of the zoning ordinance permits an occupant to have one freestanding sign per lot subject to the terms of the zoning ordinance,' Tunnell wrote in a 16-page decision. 'Billboards and off-premises sign are included ... and are permitted in the borough.

'Therefore the board properly concluded that there is no de jure prohibition and exclusion and (Chester County Outdoor's) substantive validity challenge must be denied.' ...

Even though both the zoning board and Tunnell determined that the type of advertising billboard that Chester County Outdoor had submitted plans for were permitted in Phoenixville, Verwey noted that several neighbors where the company sought to build the electronic boards had objected to them because of their size and lighting conditions...

'It was nice to make a stand against these signs, and to be able to protect the folks in the borough from this type of intrusion,' Verwey said.

According to Tunnell's decision, Chester County Outdoor appealed the zoning board's February 2012 decision, but did not offer any additional testimony or evidence than what was presented at hearings the board conducted in 2011.

The company had claimed that because the zoning ordinance did not allow for billboards in the district, including the Nutt Road locations, it went against state law that requires a municipality to provide zoning districts for all classes of people and businesses. Bartkowski has filed similar challenges in municipalities in Montgomery and Delaware counties, seeking permission to building the large electronic billboards.

At the hearings, however, the company's expert testified on cross-examination that he could find no prohibition for signs that stood alone on monopoles, such as what the company was proposing, or free standing billboards anywhere in the ordinance.

In its response, the borough submitted three applications from another billboard firm, Lamar Advertising, seeking permits to build signs in Phoenixville. The applications were denied on the basis that they were electronic message display boards, and not because of a prohibition of billboards, Tunnell wrote.

Chester County Outdoor has filed a similar challenge to the East Pikeland zoning code, and that case is still awaiting trial in Common Pleas Court..."

--Michael P. Rellahan, The Times Herald

[Read entire article here >](#)