

Scenic Watch



News -
June
2023

"Local resident's controversy on floating structure in St. Johns County waters"

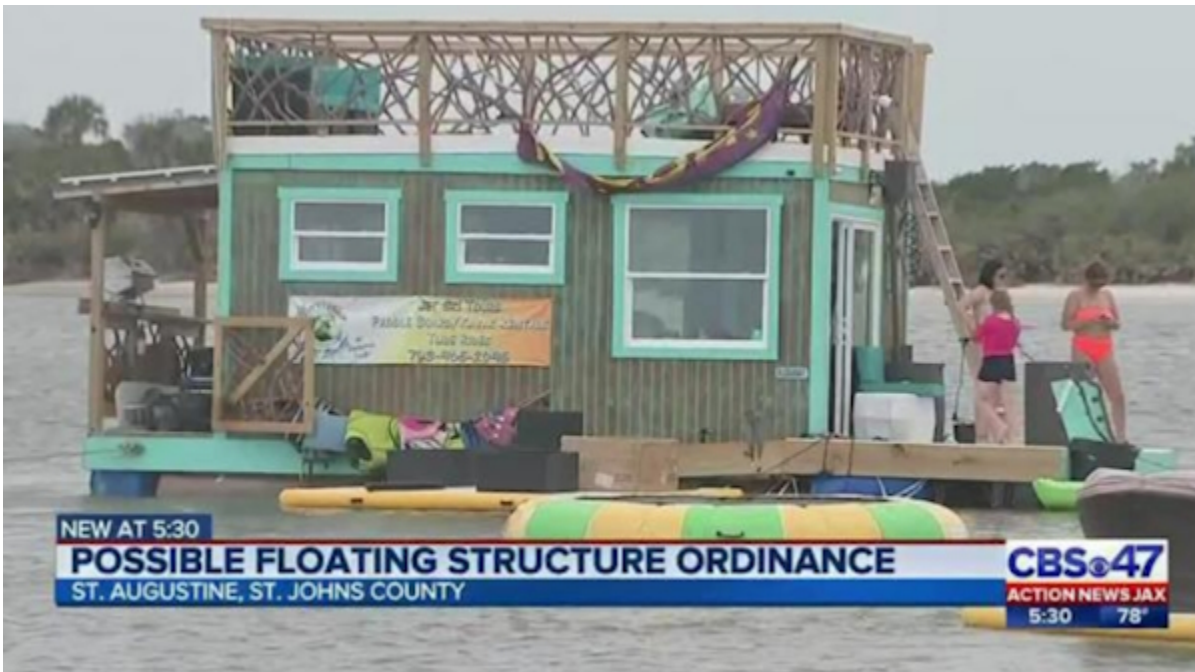


Photo: CBS 47 Action News Jax

"...St. John's County Commissioners discussed an ordinance that would prohibit floating structures.

Jeffrey Thomas is the owner of Hurricane Watersports on the Matanzas inlet.

Some of the water rentals he provides to visitors are paddle boards, kayaks, water trampolines and platforms.

A county commissioner said people in the area don't like the look of this.

'Several residents referred to it as a real eye-sore in what is probably one of the most beautiful inlets in the state of Florida,' said St. John's County Commissioner, Henry Dean.

According to Florida law, a floating structure can be defined as a floating entity that is not primarily used as a means of transportation on the water but serves purposes or provides services.

Commissioner Dean said several residents have complained about parties taking place on the structure in the Matanzas Inlet.

'I think we have an obligation to keep it relatively pristine and relatively quiet so people can enjoy the sunset, enjoy swimming and enjoy the recreational activities without these wild parties going on,' said Commissioner Dean.

Thomas told Action News Jax he had one live music festival but does not sell alcohol, and he uses this mainly for his rental business. He said it's common in other places...

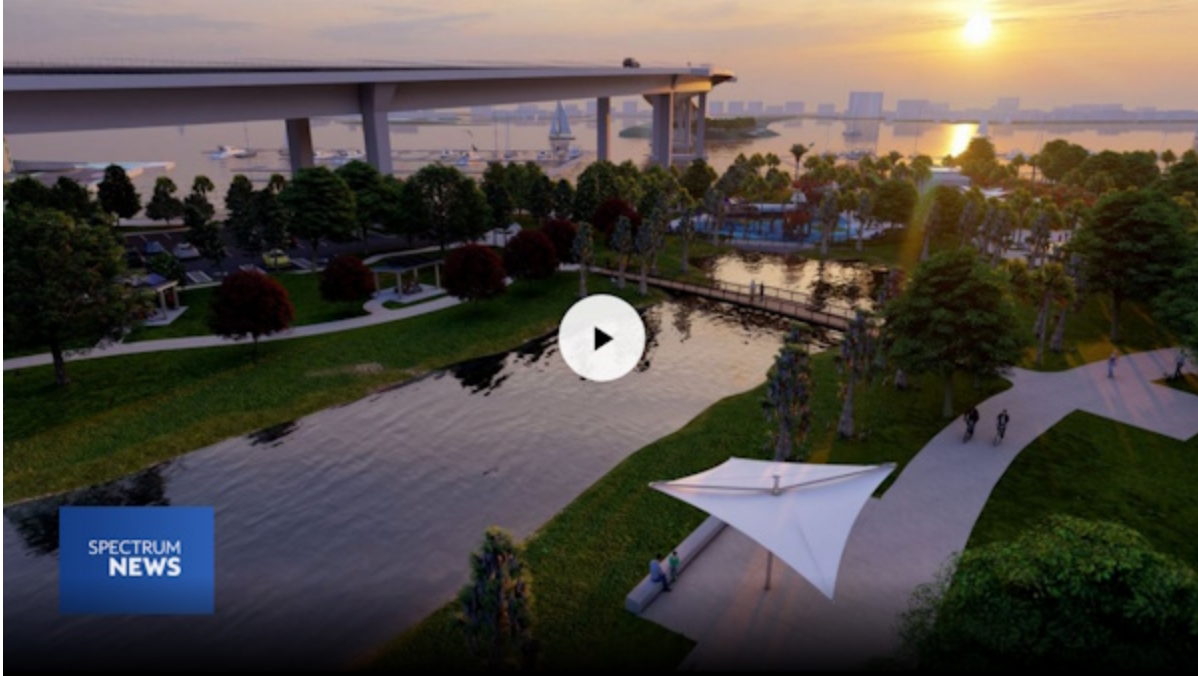
If the ordinance is passed, St. Johns County would be able to ban anything that's considered a floating structure.

There will be a second reading for the ordinance in early August."

-- Alexis Cleavenger, CBS 47 Action News Jax

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"City of Clearwater touts new Coachman Park as destination spot"



Video: Bay News 9 Tampa

Clearwater's new Coachman Park opened to the public June 28.

"I've never seen anything like it," said Mayor Brian Aungst, Sr. "It's phenomenal, and I really do think people are going to gravitate here."

"It's a game changer. It's a catalytic project that's going to spur more activity downtown, which we need and we're already seeing," said Aungst.

Catherine Corcoran started with the City of Clearwater 10 years ago as an intern. She's now overseeing the project as the Senior Landscape Architect.

The new concert venue called The Sound can seat 4,000 guests under the canopy, and up to 5,000 more on the lawn...

The Sound will be host to more than concerts.

"The chairs are removable, specifically so we can have flexible use of this space," said Corcoran. "We can do things like yoga on the lawn or an art show when there's not an event happening here."

A space providing something for everyone, with or without a concert ticket. Family fun can be found at the playground, splash pad and picnic pavilions.

Creatives can admire pieces from local artists celebrating art and diversity.

The new Coachman Park opened June 28."

-- Melissa Eichman, Bay News 9 Tampa

[Read entire article](#)

[Much more about this waterfront project here](#)

"Bald cypress planting caps Key Biscayne's recognition as Tree City USA"



Photo: Juan Castro Olivera

"Key Biscayne residents will have it made in the shade soon, with 59 trees to be planted from a Miami-Dade County Neat Streets grant, and a 60th tree which was recently planted at Lake Park with the help of young students from the K-8 School.

That 10-foot bald cypress will be symbolic of the Village's latest award, being named Tree City USA for 2022 by the National Arbor Foundation for its, well, tremendous efforts on beautification, adding oxygen into the atmosphere and extending the precious canopy to keep the environment cooler.

Olga Garcia, Zoning Plans Reviewer and Planner with the Village, was presented with the official certificate from the National Arbor Day Foundation during the last Village Council meeting by Mayor Joe Rasco for her efforts in getting Key Biscayne designated as a Tree City USA community. village council meeting

'It's a very nice thing to get; Olga handled most of the application,' said Jeremy Calleros Gauger, director of the Building, Zoning and Planning department. 'I think the symbolic portion of it is how much tree canopy Key Biscayne had added over 30 years, even 10 years.'

He said the island's 26% coverage is more than most other Miami-Dade municipalities, but 'there's still room for improvement.'

Key Biscayne becomes the 165th Tree City USA in Florida and one of 3,653 recognized cities across the country, 'a relatively small number when you think how many cities there are,' Calleros Gauger said."

-- Hillard Grossman, Islander News

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"The English Property forest gets closer to Florida
Forever's 2024 buy list"



Photo: Patricia Moynihan / WFSU Public Media

"Paul Russell Road is one of several that bisects the English property forest

A plan to save part of the English Forest in Tallahassee from development has moved a step closer. The Acquisition and Restoration Council of Florida Forever unanimously voted to approve the English Forest Preserve Project. Support from the Tallahassee City Commission, and other local entities helped secure the vote.

The Council expressed concern about the preservation plan—noting that it only covers part of the property and not all of the original 600 acres that was rezoned for mixed-use development last year. Despite those reservations, the council decided the environmental and archaeological importance of the property was enough to approve the plan for further evaluation.

'We have evidence that there's a good pattern of occupation,' said Mary Glowacki of the Panhandle Archaeological Society. She says the area was occupied by Paleo-Indian peoples.

'And the fact Mr. English himself collected a lot of lithic material that dates to that time period, there should be something out there.'

Glowacki said the potential for an archaeological discovery is likely, but not without the financial backing of Florida Forever.

'It would be unfortunate the way the development could proceed if the property didn't get brought under ARC,' she said. 'The city and the county don't have a rigorous review program for cultural resources ahead of development, so we might jeopardize finding out more about cultural resources if that's the case...'

The acquisition of the land by Florida Forever is not a done deal. The property must now undergo further evaluation, and a second vote is set for later this year to determine if the project will earn a spot on Florida Forever's 2024 priority list."

-- Alexis Rejouis, WFSU

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"Happy Pollinator Week from Deering Estate"



Photo: Butterfly Orchid, David Lotker

"Deering Estate is proud to be part of Miami-Dade County's efforts to support our native pollinators. Pollinators are essential to our lives, 75% of the world's flowering plants and 35% of the world's crops rely on pollinators. What that means is a lot of the food found in your local supermarket needed a pollinator. Now more than ever we all need to play an active role in supporting our pollinators as they are facing significant threats. A 2017 report by the Center of Biological Diversity found that 25% of native bee species are imperiled in the United States and worldwide more than 50% of native bee species are in decline.

That is why Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces and Deering Estate are leading the effort to increase native pollinator habitat in urban green spaces and educate the public that they can do the same at home...

Current and future projects

In 2023 as parts of the Parks for Pollinators initiative we have commenced our Propagation Station and Native Pollinator Nursery Area inside of the estate. This will serve as both as an exhibit on native pollinator plants, an educational area to conduct botanical workshops and field trips, and as an outdoor laboratory to experiment techniques on propagation and growth with our research interns. We hope to grow over 40 species of native pollinator plants with a focus on the plants historically found in our natural areas.

Deering Estate is hosting and participating in programs and events for our community to learn and experience the magic of native pollinators. 22, August 26 and September 23...

Park and Recreation Month is celebrated in July to promote building strong, vibrant and resilient communities through the power of parks. This year's theme "Where Community Grows" celebrates the vital role park and recreation professionals play in bringing people together, providing essential services and fostering the growth of our communities.

Make sure to check out our 'Plant an Orchid, Save a Bee' event on Saturday, July 15th where we will have Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden botanists and UF/IFAS Extension Florida-Friendly Landscaping Program agents teaching you how to plant and care of native orchids and how to build your own pollinator hotel to take home! For more information, please visit the website. "

-- Ana Alexandra Rojas, MS Conservation and Research Specialist

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Citizens for a Scenic Florida

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