



Prebble Q Ramswell

Positive Change By and For the People. Florida's Future Begins With Us!

THE RAMSWELL REVIEW

A monthly newsletter from Destin City Councilmember Prebble Q Ramswell

October/November 2016

Charting the Course for Destin's Future

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▶ Short-term LDC Changes



This is one 9-bedroom being built in Crystal Beach. Notice the dwarfed average single-family home to its right, to the left of the tree.

For what seems like years (and probably has been!) the City has been addressing concerns from the public regarding the issue of short-term rentals and the effects on our residential areas. These concerns have grown new legs the past year or so with the influx of build-to-rent homes of hotel proportions. There have been many of these homes under development and many more in the planning phases with nine bedrooms or more.

Considering the problems many of our residential areas south of 98 are already facing, these new and certainly not single-family homes are already significantly adding to the existing issues such as parking and noise. One new "single-family" home is 9,000 square feet, 9 bedrooms— yet an ad in Saturday's *Destin Log* notes it is "expected to gross more than \$700,000 in first-year rental vacation income."

I have been vocal in my desire to ensure that these mini-hotels do not negatively impact our residents, community, and quality of life. Staff has pulled together a few ways we can minimize their impact to neighboring homes and community. These ideas will be presented to council at our meeting on Monday, November 7th. Among the items being considered: mandatory green space of 30%, one parking space per bedroom, and a maximum height of 35'. These changes are proposed for Crystal Beach and Holiday Isle. I encourage you to attend and/or weigh-in. Do you agree with these proposed changes? I look forward to hearing from you!

▶ Charter Review



Would you like to be a part of reviewing the Destin City Charter? During the City's Strategic Visioning Session on May 3, 2016, the City Council determined that the City Charter presently contains provisions that would benefit from review. The review of the City Charter is one of Council's top priority objectives for FY 2017. Over the years, many citizens have pointed out items that should be in our charter and aren't, and there have been many times at city council that we have sought some direction only to be told the charter didn't address that particular issue. Well, it is time for an update.

On Monday, the Council will discuss the way forward, but here is the tentative plan: A Charter Review Committee be formed with each Council member nominating a person for appointment to the Committee. The Committee will conduct a comprehensive review of the current City Charter and propose an amendment for approval consideration by the City Council.

So: would you be interested in serving on this committee? Please send me an email and let me know!

▶ Concrete Plant Purchase



One of the council's goals has been acquiring more waterfront property to provide public parks for all to enjoy. We are thrilled to announce the acquisition of the old concrete plant on Joe's Bayou in a purchase completed last week. The city paid \$2M for the almost four-acre park on Beach Street, and is already in talks with the Tourist Development Council on funding and grant opportunities.

The plant will be developed into a waterfront park with 1600 feet of shoreline. The city is seeking input and ideas on how best to develop and build a park for all to enjoy. One suggestion has been to make it pet-friendly, which I think is an excellent idea given the popularity of our dog park! (By the way, if you haven't seen the new paw patio you need to stop by!)

I am excited about the possibilities for this park and seeing it come to fruition— along with the others parks we have in the planning stages. I see these efforts as one way to give back to the community and provide for our residents.

▶ News



Norriego Point Restoration and Recreation Project Public Meeting

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), along with the City of Destin, will host an informational meeting on the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Assessment Phase III Early Restoration Project, Norriego Point Restoration and Recreation Project, at the Destin Community Center (101 Stahlman Ave) on Tuesday, November 15, 2016, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. DEP staff and representatives from Taylor Engineering, Inc., the project design consultant, will be available at the informational meeting to answer questions and provide additional details on the project.

Medical Marijuana Zoning

The Zoning for Medical Marijuana dispensaries will be discussed on Monday, the 7th. Current proposed location is the industrial area of Town Center with a setback of 300'.

BI Inc. and Dewey Destin's Harborside v. City of Destin

The City has been served with a lawsuit regarding the fencing off of the easement/driveway on the west side of the property. Because this is in litigation I cannot comment on it but I encourage you to review past city council meeting minutes where the issue was discussed.

FDOT Open House on widening of 98

FDOT will hold a construction public information open house concerning the widening of 98. This meeting will focus on the expansion from Emerald Bay to Tang-o-Mar Drive and will be held Nov. 15th at 5:30 at Resurrection Catholic Church, 259 Miramar Beach Dr.

ELECTION DAY!

Voting day is Tuesday, November 8th! Every vote is critical in races that are expected to be close! Find out where you vote: <http://www.govote-okaloosa.com/>

Hello Friends and Neighbors!

Thank you for subscribing to my monthly newsletter, *the Ramswell Review*. It is my goal to improve communication between the city and its citizens, and act as a conduit of information on issues that affect our community and future.

I value your input and insight and am always available to you. I recognize that we each offer a unique and valuable perspective on the issues and believe everyone in this community's opinion carries weight. I believe in positive change— by and for the people. Florida's future begins with us.

I look forward to a two-way relationship with the community knowing that we all have the same goal of a beautiful, successful city centered on family values.

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I always welcome your feedback and input. However, please be sure to direct any correspondence related to city business to my city email address pramswell@cityofdestin.com.

All such correspondence shall be considered a public record pursuant to Florida's open records laws.

Any views or opinions expressed in this newsletter are my own and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Destin City Council or the views or opinions of any other Councilmember. This newsletter is not an official record nor a transcript of the matters presented to, or the decisions made by, the City Council and should not be interpreted as such.

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