



THE ST. AUGUSTINE REPORT

Local news in our Nation's Oldest City



Published by the Department of Public Affairs, City of St. Augustine, Florida

January 8 2010

Vending bans top commission agenda

Ordinances to ban vending in the Government House west garden and Ponce de Leon and Anderson circles east of the Plaza de la Constitución will be introduced at Monday's City Commission meeting.

Also on the agenda: Café tables on a portion of Aviles Street, extended alcohol sales hours, and proposals for a Greyhound bus stop and for motorcycle parking in and around our city's parking facility. The meeting begins at 5 p.m. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall.



Greyhound bus stop at Visitor Center?

Greyhound Bus, closing its Dobbs Road bus stop, is looking for a new location - and we have one at our Visitor Information Center (VIC).

Chief Operations Officer John Regan will seek commission guidance on establishing a month to month operations agreement for Greyhound to use the bus terminal area at our VIC parking facility.

City staff authorized a temporary permit when Greyhound announced its Dobbs Road shut-down.

Regan said Greyhound would use an "e-ticket" system not requiring a waiting room or clerk.

Vending bans designed to protect "historically significant" areas

The vending ordinances, urged by commissioners in their last meeting in 2009, cite "historically significant structures and statuary situated in the heart of the ancient walled city."

The ordinances include "substantial findings of fact" that City Attorney Ron Brown notes will require supporting testimony if commissioners advance them to public hearings at its January 25 meeting.

Among the concerns: emergency access, local economy, and public health, safety and welfare.

Control of King/Malaga streets, too

Panhandlers setting up outside the police station at King and Malaga streets would be banned under a proposed ordinance to be introduced Monday.

The ordinance would ban sales and solicitation within 50 feet of the intersection. Among concerns: panhandlers have been observed pressing the walk button to stop traffic.

If approved, it will join the vending ordinances in public hearings and final action January 25.

2 a.m. extension for alcohol sales?

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

[Previous Issues](#)

On the heels of our county and St. Augustine Beach, commissioners will consider an ordinance temporarily extending alcohol serving hours from 1 to 2 a.m.

The ordinance proposes a trial run until the commission's July 12 meeting. With commission approval, the ordinance will advance to public hearing January 25.

Both the county and St. Augustine Beach recently approved the extended hour.

Café tables ala European style

Sidewalk dining, long a staple in European cities, will become part of St. Augustine's ambience if a proposed ordinance passes public hearing and final commission approval Monday.

Proposed is a portion of the first block of Aviles Street on the west side, location of several cafes. Under the ordinance, restaurants would pay a \$150 application fee and \$10 a square foot annual permit fee.

The concept of sidewalk café tables is part of a redesign plan for the block, including replacement of west side parking spaces with extended sidewalk, metered parking in the Trinity Episcopal Church parking lot on Artillery Lane in cooperation with the church, and improved lighting.



Ideas for motorcycle parking

City commissioners Monday will discuss possibilities in response to requests for motorcycle parking in our Visitor Center parking facility.

The parking facility was not designed for motorcycles, Chief Operations Officer John Regan says - one problem being their inability to trip sensor plates on exiting. Regan will present his ideas for possible solutions.

New sidewalk for West Castillo Drive

A new sidewalk on the north side, the length of West Castillo Drive - our city's main entrance to the Visitor Information Center and parking facility - is proposed in a resolution going before the commission Monday.

Under a proposed agreement, the Florida Department of Transportation will use economic stimulus funding to design and build the sidewalk, and the city will assume its maintenance. The 1,500-foot, 5-foot wide sidewalk will extend from US 1 to San Marco Avenue.

Commissioner negotiates Echo House plan

Behind the effort to save Lincolnville's historic Echo House is City Commissioner Leanna Freeman, determined to "make this dream a reality."



Her efforts, including a site visit with city staff and negotiations between Echo House Trustee Ted Miles and St. Paul Pastor Ron Rawls, have brought the historic property from the brink of demolition to potential restoration as St. Paul's School of Excellence.

"But that dream depends on a solid plan to restore the property," Freeman said. She'll be meeting with City Manager Bill Harriss and City Attorney Ron Brown to make sure the city's concerns are met. The city has a reverter interest in the property if it is not used for non-profit purposes.

The property was originally the Buckingham Smith Nursing Home, later a community center, but for many years has been vacant and in October was tagged as unsafe.

While our city code board gave the Echo House Board of Trustees time to seal up the property, Freeman set to work getting Pastor Rawls and Trustee Miles together. They're finalizing transfer paperwork; then Rawls has to clear a plan through his church hierarchy and find restoration funds. He

hopes the property can become a School of Excellence he has a committee developing.

History's Highlights

The joys and sorrows of 1702

One in a series of historic features as we prepare for our commemorations, drawn from research by George Gardner

January 6, 1702, Governor Don Joseph de Zuñiga y Cerda issues a proclamation "convoking all the vecinos (neighbors) and residents of San Agustín, whatever their estate, quality, or condition, to gather on the Day of Kings, to raise pennants and acclaim Don Felipe, the fifth of that name, our King and lord."

The gran fiesta opened at daybreak with a royal cannon salvo from the Castillo and pealing of the city's bells. At 3 p.m. the garrison's infantry companies marched into the town Plaza where a stage bore a canopied dais with the royal standard and, above that, a painting of the king.

At 4, the governor and royal officials ascended the stage. The royal treasurer, holding the royal standard, called out: "Castilla Florida! Castilla Florida! Castilla Florida! For the Catholic King, Don Felipe, fifth of that name, God save our King and natural lord, que viva!" The crowd roared: "Viva! Viva! Viva!"

The infantry volleyed, garrison's banners waved, the Castillo's artillery fired and church bells rang out. Now came a scramble for silver coins thrown by the treasurer and "cascades of sweets" tossed by notables. Hidalgos (gentlemen of rank) then entered the Plaza to "run the ring" - throwing a lance through a suspended ring from a galloping horse.

The evening brought "theatrical performances and panegyrics" to the Plaza stage, continuing "until nearly ten at night."

Ten months later, November 6, 1702, Governor Zuñiga issued another proclamation: "The enemy is approaching by land and by sea and they are bringing the means to attack and besiege the royal fort."

The beginning of the 54-day British siege of 1702.



Courtesy of Davis Walker, from Amy Turner Bushnell's *Situado and Sabana: Spain's Support System for the Presidio and Mission Provinces of Florida*, University of Georgia Press (1995)

The St. Augustine Report is published by the Department of Public Affairs of the City of St. Augustine each Tuesday and on Fridays previewing City Commission meetings. The Report is written and distributed by George Gardner, former St. Augustine Mayor (2002-2006) and Commissioner (2006-2008) and a longtime newspaper reporter and editor. Contact The Report at gardner@aug.com

Email Marketing by

