

BRICKELL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

NEWS

VOL. XVI NO. 3 • NEWSLETTER OF THE BRICKELL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC. • ELECTION ISSUE 2006

BRICKELL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION is comprised of condominium association members and associate members representing some 16,000 residents along the Brickell corridor and on Brickell Key from the Miami River to the Rickenbacker Causeway. The purpose of BHA is to communicate common interests more effectively and mobilize support on important issues relating to the quality of life in our neighborhood.

www.brickellhomeowners.com

 **VOTE**
Nov. 7
Runoff Nov. 21

Poll Locations

Precinct 541

**Miami Fire Station #4,
1105 SW 2nd Ave.**

Precincts 569 & 995

**Immanuel Lutheran
Church
1770 Brickell Ave.**

CITY OF MIAMI COMMISSION, DISTRICT 2

Brickell Neighborhood PAC Endorses Frank Rollason

The Brickell Neighborhood Political Action Committee announced its endorsement of **Frank Rollason** for City of Miami Commissioner, District 2. Mr. Rollason's broad experience in many areas of City government, his practical, common-sense approach to problem solving, and his pledge for change were among the key reasons the PAC selected him as their leading choice for the seat.

The District 2 Commissioner seat is an important one to the Brickell neighborhood, since the City controls many factors that impact quality of life for neighbors and businesses.

Police protection, construction sprawl, and property code enforcement are major areas of residents' concerns and are all controlled by the City of Miami.



Frank Rollason

Mr. Rollason has worked for the City for 40 years, heading up many departments during his tenure. BHA leaders have worked with him on a number of areas over the years.

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POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Recalling How it Started for Brickell

Angry. Frustrated. Disillusioned. Those were the sentiments of many Brickell Homeowners Association Directors and residents in 1997 after the most recent blow by City of Miami Commissioners overruling the will of BHA neighbors for the benefit of one or a few.

It was the latest in a series of defeats at City Hall when neighbors could not get the attention, let alone cooperation, from officials and staffers

largely unresponsive to its constituents. Residents may recall:

- Union meetings drawing hundreds of people, cars and congestion in otherwise residential Brickell allowed by Commissioners despite their own zoning laws and massive disruption to neighboring residences.
- A plastic surgeon is granted special exceptions to the zoning ordinance and allowed to buy a private resi-

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Time to Make Your Voice Heard

On Nov. 7th, Brickell neighbors will have the opportunity to exercise their democratic right at the polls. While we will vote for local and statewide races, for residents in our area, the biggest impact is likely to be felt from the elected official closest to our daily concerns: that of City of Miami Commissioner for District 2.

It is a particularly good race, so far will minimal dirty politics (at the time of this writing) and perhaps most importantly, with a slate of particularly well qualified candidates. That was made clear in

August at our annual Candidates Forum, where the leading four contenders participated. All demonstrated solid understanding of many of the issues and made strong arguments for their viewpoints. Neighbors asked many insightful questions, and it was a learning process for all in attendance.

The Brickell Neighborhood PAC, a separate entity from BHA but with overlapping interests, has made an endorsement for Frank Rollason for this seat after a thorough, thoughtful process, with the best interests of our neighborhood

in mind (see cover story). We thank the PAC for its work, and encourage all neighbors to make it to the polls on Nov. 7th. Since there are seven candidates in the District 2 race, it is almost inevitable that there will be a runoff on Nov. 21st between the top two vote-getters.

Most importantly, we all must vote. Our influence at City Hall is a function of not just our numbers, but even more meaningful, the percentage of eligible voters who actually vote. •

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BHA's Comments at Ground Breaking

“Thank you Mayor Diaz, Commissioners, City staff members and neighbors. It is a privilege to be invited to address you today on behalf of Brickell Homeowners Association. This is a joyous occasion to be able to share with you, since it was about six or seven years ago when the idea of a streetscape plan for Brickell Avenue first came about, percolating from the Brickell Homeowners Beautification Committee.

We should salute those neighbors – those volunteers – who worked on the Streetscape Committee, for they didn't limit their vision. Miami, as we all know, is often called The Magic City. Much of that magic comes from Brickell, now a world-class street name in a league that includes Peachtree in Atlanta, Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, Fifth Avenue in New York and Champs-Elysees in Paris. Why shouldn't Miami have a great, grand entrance for its city, too?

Brickell Homeowners engaged an excellent firm to assist us in starting to plan for this vision — Wallace, Roberts & Todd — and we were fortunate that city officials and staffers have given us their endorsement



“It's just hair, dammit!”

danny aruj

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and support to finally bring us to this day.

Of course, Brickell is more than the name of a street; it is a thriving neighborhood. The name conjures up an image of the ultimate in urban living, an image that is irresistible to many. The Brickell Neighborhood is indeed a great place to work, a great place to live, a great place to dine...and becoming a great place to shop. Soon, it will be a grand entrance as well.” •

—Tory Jacobs



BHA President Tory Jacobs speaking on behalf of neighbors at September groundbreaking.



City Manager Pete Hernandez, Mayor Manny Diaz, Commissioner Linda Haskins, Tory Jacobs and Transportation Director Mary Conway.



Miami Police Commander Ronald Papier, Tory Jacobs and NET Administrator Liza Walton

BHA News is published by the Brickell Homeowners Association to keep neighbors, public officials and others in the community informed of the activities and concerns of its residents.

Advertising is accepted on a space-available basis, and BHA reserves the right to accept or reject all advertising. For advertising information or other details, see the BHA Web site or write to Communications Director, Natalie Brown, nbrown@brickellhomeowners.com Editorial material and suggestions are also welcome for consideration.

Brickell Neighborhood Political Action Committee

Mission

The purpose and function of the Brickell Neighborhood Political Action Committee is to present to local government officials, elected and/or appointed, the Community concerns, goals, interests and wishes of our members as property owners, taxpayers and/or voters in the Brickell Community.

Through the continued monitoring of the processes of government as well as the active involvement of our representatives in these processes effecting our community, the appropriate government administrators will not only be made aware of our positions, but also made aware of

the political consequences of failing to respond in an appropriate manner.

Further, it is our purpose to advocate and represent our Community's interests in opposition to special interests and/or proposals which will negatively impact the quality of life in the Brickell area.

Ongoing Objectives

- 1 Monitor area zoning matters to zealously protect the existing character of the neighborhood.
- 2 Enfranchise all property owners in the Brickell area — whether or not registered voters; whether or not they have citizenship status or eligibility to vote; whether they are

individuals or businesses, residents or nonresidents — with a political voice and representation on all common issues at all levels of government.

- 3 To assure via continual monitoring of the political process that our community is not caught by surprise by back-room political activities. And that by being informed early on, we are able to be proactive rather than reactive to government initiatives.
- 4 To protect and enhance our neighborhood by building our political influence to a level sufficient to ensure that government officials are mindful of our concerns. •

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“PAC Endorsement” continued from page 1

“Frank has a long history of heading up critical city departments, and has always been a go-to guy for getting things accomplished,” the committee said in its news release.

Mr. Rollason said this election is about control of the commission, and about fixing troubles in the City: a police force facing eminent “crisis” due to years of stalled negotiations between the union and City leaders, driving officers to better-paying jobs in other municipalities; development that’s not going in the right places where the infrastructure exists to support it; and a “ward politics” mentality among a commission protecting district interests rather than taking a citywide view.

“There are things that are not right that need to be fixed, but they can be fixed,” Mr. Rollason said.

The City has the funds to do what needs to be done if they eliminate the waste, the exorbitant amount of money going to consultants and studies, and the way they build their budgets every year, among other steps, he said. The City’s overall budget has grown from approximately \$350 million in 2002 to over half a billion dollars now. That’s a lot of extra revenue in the City, and one wonders where it’s going.

“If you’re happy with how things are going, then I’m not your guy,” he said. This is not a dream job; this is a mission to fix things.”•

dence to open up shop on otherwise residential Brickell.

- While residents sleep, a huge gate is erected to block access to the primary access for Wainwright Park users, residents and others, in essence granting the rich and famous a private street in Miami.

Déjà vu

The union. The plastic surgeon. "Sly-gate." BHA Directors pondered how the same sequence was common in all those situations:

The BHA Board, representing some 5,000 households at the time, would take a stand and communicate residents' viewpoint to City of Miami officials.

Often City of Miami zoning codes favored the stand of BHA, and City of Miami planning and legal staffs often advised City politicians in favor of the BHA side.

The special interest side would hire one of a select few legal firms or lobbyists that always seemed to be involved in many City matters.

City Commissioners would vote against the BHA, supporting the wishes of the one organization or single individual.

It Got Worse

On top of these affronts, the City went beyond eroding quality of life to imposing an unprecedented, and unconstitutional, tax, the "Fire Rescue Fee." Many worried that this newest, lucrative tactic of increasing City coffers during its bankruptcy, would not end with this first tax.

That's Not What They Taught In School

BHA representatives investigated, "How can these things happen?" The answer that most

couldn't bear to hear: Politics."

It seemed that while the BHA employed top-notch legal counsel, somehow the other sides' advisors seemed to have more clout with the elected officials. They seemed to deal with City officials on a regular basis and have an ongoing dialog, a "give-and-take," about what interests each side. For the attorneys, a.k.a., lobbyists, this would be their client's interests. For the elected officials, it's getting re-elected.

It also seemed that perhaps elected officials thought BHA residents weren't concerned, or active in the political process to impact their decisions. After all, the Brickell area is only a part-time residence for many homeowners. A good number of residents are not available, eligible or registered to vote. Although votership is strong among registered voters in BHA precincts, the politicians assessed there was less political clout on the condo side. Never mind that Brickell Homeowners already pay 10 percent of the residential property taxes for the City of Miami but represents five percent of the population. Never mind that Miami Police report that the Brickell area generates the least amount of emergency calls in all of Miami. Never mind the irony of taxing Brickell for a service they're never likely to use.

BHA Directors were troubled that the fair representation process hadn't worked. The BHA approach had been a grassroots effort in which the association democratically determines the collective will of its homeowners on matters of common concern and represents this stand to those government officials empowered to make the final decision. But that hadn't worked.

Letters, petitions, open dialog and calm interchange with the proper authorities hadn't worked. Turning members out to City meetings to make their opinions known

hadn't worked. Standing firm in beliefs about quality of life issues through legal battles to the end with outstanding legal counsel didn't work.

BHA residents asked, "So, what's it take?"

Time To PAC It In

In the 21st century version of neighborhood politics, a Political Action Committee is the way many go about looking out for their interests. PACs are no longer the exclusive domain of the big-time players in big-stake politics. It's the way it's done even at the local level.

The Brickell Homeowners Association voted to support the formation of a Political Action Committee in 1997 to be set up independently of the BHA in partnership with neighboring civic groups. The purpose of the PAC (outlined in the Mission Statement on previous page) is to watch out for the interests of area residents in matters of local government and to support and endorse candidates who fairly represent these interests.

The Brickell Neighborhood PAC is funded by private donations and is not funded by BHA.

Brickell residents need not be registered or even eligible to vote to participate in the PAC. Anyone with an interest is invited to become a member of the PAC. For more information, contact Natalie Brown at BHA via email: nbrown@brickellhomeowners.com.

**Let us hear
from you...**



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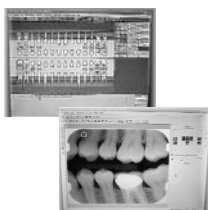
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