



RAYS OF HOPE ?

Will Our Cities Lead the Way To Control Growth ?



Attend

Control Growth Now's
27th Anniversary

**Annual Meeting
and Luncheon**

Saturday

March 12

More Information on
Pages 5 & 6

Return Form on Pg. 7
— Only \$20 —



★ **Come Hear
and Honor** ★
Fred Fraize

**Venice City Council
Member**

CGN Citizen of the Year

The people of Venice were looking for a citizen to step forward to challenge the developer machine. Fred Fraize rose to the challenge and won, as did Deborah Anderson before him. With three more City Council seats up in November, the future of Venice hangs in the balance.

In the City of Sarasota, two City Commissioners, Susan Chapman and Willie Shaw, have shown a commitment to the public interest rather than blind fealty to developers. On February 16, they finally succeeded where they failed in 2014, to restore the water and

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Are Very Welcome***



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President's Message



Let's Tap Into That Populism Here At Home

Yes, that's a morphed image of Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders. Disturbing as it may be, it makes a point. Despite big differences, Trump and Sanders are both attracting strong support by denouncing the current political system and government as corrupt to the core. Much of what is wrong with our federal government, they both say, is the result of manipulation by certain monied interests to their benefit and against the interests of everyone else.

Certainly, that is true at the state and local levels at least as much as it is in Washington.

Is there any doubt as to why big developers and allied interests pour tens of thousands of dollars into campaigns for their hand-picked candidates for Sarasota County Commission, directly and through shady PAC's? These people are not stupid. They reap millions in return by getting impact fees lowballed, being allowed to clog our roads, pave over wetlands and disrupt neighborhoods, promoting both urban sprawl and urban congestion, all to their increased profit and to the harm of our quality of life.

We desperately need candidates to boldly carry the flag of reform against this undue influence, both Republicans and Democrats. Many people are ready to embrace this message, as they are doing in the presidential campaign — if we are given the choice.

President, **Control Growth Now**

Why We Honor Fred Fraize

Each year, Control Growth Now honors as Citizen of the Year someone who has shown a devotion to principle in the public interest, for the protection and betterment of the quality of life in our community.

This year, we recognize Fred Fraize of Venice. We do so because this good man exemplifies the importance of skilled citizens of good will stepping forward to challenge those who would betray the public trust in local offices.

On November 3, 2015, developer domination of the Venice City Council and local politics, sometimes called the Boone Machine (after Jeff Boone, the attorney who heads it up) was shaken to its roots.

Citizen activist Fred Fraize knocked off two-term incumbent Ernie Carlesimo, a reliable vote for the Boone Machine. Carlesimo had come onto the Venice City Council in a successful move by developers in 2008 to replace three City Council members who had defied their demands and consistently voted for the public interest. The election came on the heels of another strong public interest advocate, Deborah Anderson, defeating another strong ally of the developers in the 2014 election.

The election was acknowledged on both sides to be about growth and traffic, sparked by the City Council's approval of The Woodlands development by Pat Neal in an environmentally sensitive rural area at a much greater density than nearby homes, despite an outpouring of public opposition.



"I don't think the voice of the people is being heard," Fraize said in a television interview of the candidates.

Fred Fraize served on the City's Environmental Advisory Board since 2012 and continues as its City Council liaison. An avid cyclist, he was also appointed to the Traffic Advisory Task Force in 2015.

He is on the Board of Directors of the Sawgrass Homeowners Association. A Navy veteran, he is a member of American Legion Post 159 in Venice.

No one can say that Fred Fraize is unsympathetic to the legitimate interests of builders, having over 20 years experience in the construction industry. He also worked for the government for over 30 years, ten of them in management. He has a Bachelors of Science in information systems from the University of

Lowell. He is in his 60's, some would say part of the younger demographic in his City.

Fred Fraize and his wife Stella have been married for 47 years and have what he describes as two wonderful children and four beautiful grandchildren. They met in their Church youth group, where he says they first learned about community service, and have been together ever since. They moved to Venice in 2005, having "found paradise", after visiting the area from Massachusetts for many years.

"I'm not a politician," Fraize told an audience during the campaign, "I'm a regular guy who's sick of the status quo."

As are many of us. We are privileged to be able to recognize Fred Fraize as our Citizen of the Year.



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sewer impact fee on developers. Suzanne Atwell switched her vote from no to yes and was joined by Liz Alpert and Shelly Freeland Ellie, who replaced former pro-developer City Commissioners Shannon Snyder and (now pro-developer County Commissioner) Paul Caragiulo. Caragiulo admitted in 2014 that “it does look heinous” for the City Commission to hike utility bills annually for residents and businesses while giving developers a free ride, even though he did it. Now City Commissioners have seen the light, restored the water and sewer impact fee and will be considering a rollback of utility rates due to the new revenue.



In Venice, Fred Fraize has sought to raise awareness of community concerns by his colleagues, even losing by one vote a resolution to urge the School Board and County to raise school impact fees, gaining support from usually pro-developer Mayor John Holic together with Deborah Anderson. Two pro-developer Council members are up for election in November, and pro-citizen candidates are needed to challenge them.

In North Port, the City Commission voted unanimously to seek public acquisition and conservation of the 5,774 acre Orange Hammock Ranch, rejecting the pleas of those who would prefer that it be developed.

Even in Sarasota County government, some rays of light are apparent. Commissioners supported North Port on the Orange Hammock preserva-

tion. So far, the County Commission seems inclined to support the effort by its staff and consultant to increase impact fees to their full allowed amount for parks, libraries, justice facilities, emergency medical services, fire and rescue and general government. That may be because the Commission plans a referendum this fall on a tax hike and deeper debt to build new facilities for some of those same purposes, because those impact fees have been too low.

And County staff has so far been fairly reasonable in their first draft of a comprehensive revision of the Comprehensive Plan, not gutting it for developers as we anticipated, except for a few items, most notably the proposed elimination of square footage limits for Commercial Centers. Of course, the Chamber of Commerce and developer attorney Bill Merrill have requested some changes that we have not yet reviewed, so we'll see how that shakes out.

This is not to say that there have not been some outrageous giveaways to developers by the Sarasota County Commission, such as allowing Whole Foods to pave over valuable wetlands that previous Commissions had denied, in return for questionable “mitigation” far away in Manatee County. And on the same day, the Commission continued to pack the Planning Commission with developers and others in the development industry and most recently appointed Jim Ley, the scandal-ridden, pro-developer former County Administrator to the County committee which advises the Commission on how much developers should pay in impact fees and how much the people should be taxed instead. On December 8, although not reported in the press, the County Commission violated the County Charter by amending the Comprehensive Plan to add 2,882 acres of urban development just south of the Urban Services Boundary without requiring that it be “fiscally neutral.” Prior to that,

the County Commission adopted a Mobility Plan which slashes transportation impact fees on developers by 47.5% throughout much of the urban area.

Time will tell to what extent City and County Commissioners will do what the people want and need or will betray their trust for patrons in the development industry.

In addition to the ongoing revision of the Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan, the City of Venice is also undertaking that task and developers and citizens are already staking out their positions. In the County and in the cities of Venice and Sarasota, current requirements that developers do traffic studies and pay their proportionate share of needed road improvements, known as concurrency, are under review and risk potential repeal.

The Sarasota City Commission will soon vote on whether to continue to slash transportation

impact fees, after agreeing to consider raising them to the full amount allowed by law. They will also at some point vote on a crazy proposal to reduce Fruitville Road from four to two lanes from US 41 to US 301 to supposedly encourage walking and biking, a concept known as “complete streets” or a “road diet.” (In another ray of light, County Commissioner Christine Robinson has come out against this).



Pat Neal will soon be presenting a proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment to the County for an “alternative approach” to developing 528 acres south of Clark Road east of I-75, rather than complying with what is left of the Sarasota

2050 Plan after the County Commission gutted it, especially for that area.

And more. The clash between development interests and the public interest continues. The extent to which the light will shine or darkness will pervade remains to be seen.



Attend Control Growth Now's Annual Meeting and Luncheon



Saturday, March 12

We very much look forward to seeing you at Control Growth Now's annual meeting and luncheon, which is open to the public as well as members. The event is at Marina Jack, 2 Marina Plaza in downtown Sarasota, for 11 to 2.



Marina Jack

Register by mail with the form on p. 7 or online with easy payment by credit card through Eventbrite, at www.controlgrowthnow.org. Bring your friends and family!

The menu features a choice of Oscar Grouper, Chicken Caprese or Vegetable Plate. The grouper and chicken include a vegetable and specialty rice, and dessert is included, as well as coffee or tea. We will hear from our Citizen of the Year, Venice City Council Member Fred Fraize, and candidates for local office, as well as an update on hot local issues. This is an event you will not want to miss!

*The Pleasure of Your Company
Will Be Appreciated*

At The *Twenty-Seventh Anniversary*

Control Growth Now Luncheon

Saturday, March 12, 2016

11:30 AM To 2 PM

Marina Jack Restaurant

2 Marina Plaza, Sarasota



Honoring Venice City Council Member

Fred Fraize

Control Growth Now *Citizen of the Year*

Reservations Required - Not Later Than 5 pm March 10, 2016

Please Fill Out And Return The Enclosed Card

If Late Call 955-5622 - \$20 Each (Oscar Grouper, Chicken Caprese or Vegetable Plate)

Yes,

**CONTROL
GROWTH
NOW**

- count me in:



(Complete as many as apply - Membership is welcomed but is not required to attend luncheon meeting)

\$ _____ (**\$20 each**) **CGN membership for one year**

\$ _____ (**\$20each**) **Luncheon and annual meeting March 12**

Choose your entrée* - Number: _____ Grouper Oscar

_____ Chicken Caprese

_____ Vegetarian Dish

\$ _____ (Any additional contribution to our efforts for us all)

\$ _____ TOTAL

Thank You!

Please make your check to **Control Growth Now** and mail to:

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Control Growth Now P.O. Box 277 Osprey, FL 34229-0277

** Meal includes vegetables, specialty rice, dessert and coffee or tea*