

CONTROL GROWTH NOW

News

Save Sarasota County

February 21, 2020

www.controlgrowthnow.org

Vol. 31, No.1

Integrity 2020

LET'S DO IT



Attend

Control Growth Now's
31st Anniversary

**Annual Meeting
and Luncheon**

Saturday

March 21

**See Registration
Info on Last Page**



Come Hear and Honor
★ **Bill Cantrell** ★



*President of
the Nokomis
Area Civic
Association*

**CGN Citizen
of the Year**

High Time For Reform

For far too long, big-money developers have had undue influence over our local politics and policies.

Now with voters approving single member districts for County Commission elections and with increased citizen activism, we stand a chance to turn the tide to rein in urban sprawl, protect our environment and neighborhoods, keep our cities and county livable, control traffic gridlock and make growth pay its own way.

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www.controlgrowthnow.org

**Annual Membership Dues
Are \$20 Per Year**

***Additional Contributions Are
Very Welcome***



CGN Board of Directors

Dan Lobeck - *President*

Glenna Blomquist - *VP*

Tom Price - *Treasurer*

Sharon Guy - *Secretary*

Neil Bass

Ron Shankland

Victor Dobrin

Mike Lasche

Tim Brady



President's Message



Step Up



Integrity 2020.

It's an opportunity to elect politicians of principle, who seek to serve their constituents rather than their contributors, who are dedicated to the public interest as well as the legitimate interests of individuals.

If we are to have that opportunity however, we must have choices at the ballot box. Republicans, Democrats and others.

Locally, the developers are on their game. They've already hand-picked their candidates for County Commission and School Board and are at work lining up their choices for Charter Review Board, Sarasota City Commission and other offices.

People of good will should step forward as well and encourage others to do so. With single member districts for County Commission, a grassroots candidate now has a shot. Other offices are also in reach. If you might be interested in running or know someone who may, please let us know, at controlgrowthsarasota@gmail.com, so that we can discuss it.

President, Control Growth Now

Why We Honor Bill Cantrell

With his dynamic leadership skills and hard work, together with other Directors and volunteers, CGN’s 2020 Citizen of the Year Bill Cantrell has led the Nokomis Area Civic Association (NACA) to ever greater accomplishments. More than ever, NACA strives to promote the general welfare and quality of life in Nokomis and Sarasota County, providing an organized voice for their community north of Venice.

NACA is an “Umbrella” civic group, comprised of 38 Homeowners Associations and unincorporated neighborhoods in Nokomis. Since 2001, working closely with Sarasota County, NACA has played a key role in the current Revitalization Plan for Nokomis, the six-lane, landscaped Tamiami Trail through Nokomis, the “heavy landscaping” at Laurel Road/I-75 exit, installment of water, sewer lines and street lights along Colonia Lane, plus the oversight of many land-use rezoning requests. NACA also sits on the Neighborhood Advisory Council for the new Sarasota Memorial Hospital being constructed at Laurel Road/I-75.

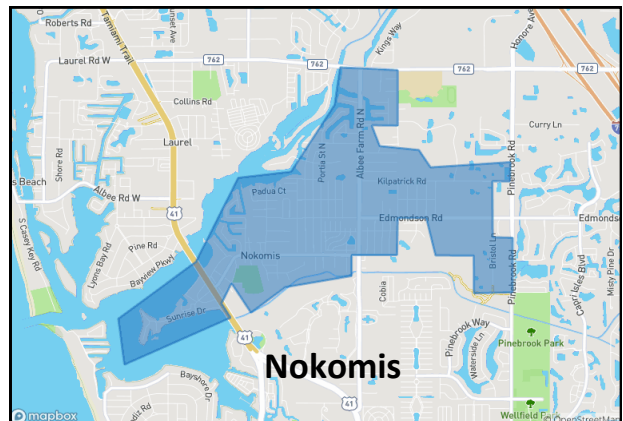
In 2019, NACA wanted to position itself to better assist specific local needs. It became 501(c)3 Non-Profit. Working closely with Sarasota County Parks and Recreation, NACA hosted the 1st Annual Nokomis Historic Day and was able to raise monies for local children in need for summer camp scholarships. This summer, up to 15 local children will be able to participate and attend the County’s summer camp program. Plans are already being made

for the 2nd Annual Historic Nokomis Day in November 2020, with the goal to raise enough money for up to 25 scholarships.

Bill brings extensive community involvement to his role with NACA. He led a men’s ministry at St. Thomas More for many years, raising monies and donations for community organizations *Take Stock In Children, St. Vincent De-Paul, The First Tee and Agape Flights*. Currently, Bill is focused on what he believes is one of the most important issues our community faces, Water Quality in our Gulf Waters.

Born and raised in North Carolina, Bill is a graduate of Appalachian State University. He has been a resident of Sarasota County for over 30 years. Bill and his wife Linda reside in Calusa Lakes. Bill uses his love and deep knowledge of this area while working with his Real Estate clients. He has been awarded Top 100 Golf Club Fitters from Mizuno Golf 3 of the

last 5 years. He also enjoys Nokomis from the air as a private pilot licensed for high performance, single engine flight.



Welcome New CGN Board Members



Tim Brady grew up outside Washington, D.C. where his father was a career FBI man. He spent 30 years in fast-growth tech companies, helping architect complex information systems. Most

recently, Tim ran for the Venice City Council, losing that bid but securing 44% of the vote with a controlled-growth, smart development platform.

Tim also has a 40-year history of volunteering, being active in HOAs, Animal Rescue, Church Boards, and a Pro-Bono Health Services organization. He's been in Sarasota for six years, and he and his wife, Regina, currently reside in Venice.

Victor Dobrin is a native of Romania where he graduated in aerospace engineering and worked in the only jet engine plant and College of Aerospace Engineering in that country. After his immigration



to the US he worked mainly in the field of automotive engineering, powertrain and fuel cell technology research and development, both as a technical specialist and technical manager and retired from Ford Motor Co. in 2015. In April 2017 he permanently moved to West Villages in Sarasota County.

After his retirement he continued to be driven by the principles of integrity and expanded his community involvement both in Michigan and

Florida, where now is a member of the Parks Advisory and Recreation Council and General Contractors Examining and Licensing Board at the county level and serves as the only homeowner on the Board of the West Villages Improvement District. He deployed with his community actions to rebalance the irresponsible decisions of the local government in a few areas, including taxation. He believes in organic growth where the rights and the interests of the citizen and communities take priority.

Mike Lasche has been a leading bicycle and pedestrian advocate for 35 years. He received a B.A. in Public Policy from New College in 1985, with a thesis that received international renown for creating the first methodology for governments to put a value on bicycle projects. He brought bicycle and pedestrian friendly road design to our region through a coalition he formed called Spokespeople. Mike also won statewide legislation as Florida's first bicycle lobbyist and founded the Florida Bicycle Association.



Mike then obtained a Masters in Private and Public Management at Yale in 1991 and entered the fields of education and Internet service. In 2006, he returned to bicycle/pedestrian policy and through his groups Bicycle/Pedestrian Advocates and Florida Walks and Bikes obtained sidewalks and bike lanes on many local roads, influenced state laws and worked with Control Growth Now to defeat the insane Fruitville "Road Diet" scheme and to preserve bike lanes on that road.

Mike co-founded STOP!, a City of Sarasota group which advocated for wider sidewalks, an end to administrative site plan approval and better traffic planning. STOP! was successful in ending the City's

development of the Form-Based Code, achieving wider sidewalks in city planning and zoning, and stopping the City from ignoring its own code by not requiring notice of projects to neighbors, not collecting stated fees from developers, and not requiring some projects to even provide site plans. Mike has also served as the Co-Chair of the Sierra Club Conservation Committee.

We thank **Tim Brady, Victor Dobrin** and **Mike Lasche**—from Venice, North Port and Sarasota — for joining the Control Growth Now Board of Directors, adding their talents and experience to our deliberations and efforts to build our group and its influence in our communities.

We are also grateful to **Dan Lobeck, Glenna Blomquist, Sharon Guy, Neil Bass, Tom Price** and **Ron Shankland** for standing for election to another two year term, with our three new Directors, at the March 21 annual meeting and luncheon. Thank you also to our continuing Membership Chair **Mary Ann Gentile** and to outgoing Director **Pete Theisen** for his years of service.

No Parking For “The Bay”?

Control Growth Now has uncovered an insane scheme to replace the Van Wezel with a 25% larger, new taxpayer-built performing arts center and create other attractions on 53 acres of public bayfront in Sarasota while reducing parking there from 1,427 spaces at present to only 473—a reduction of more than two-thirds! City staff says that can be done by changing the “behavior” of patrons with high parking fees and parking shortages which “encourage” patrons to share cars and use Uber and with paid incentives to walk from home to events.

This is part of a misguided contempt for cars and those who drive them by the City Manager and staff, which was behind their failed push for a “Road Diet” to shrink Fruitville Road in the City to two lanes, and other measures.

While the Bay project has good points, this makes no sense. Maybe the present Van Wezel needs to be kept, with the taxes going instead to a parking garage to increase green space?



Attend Control Growth Now’s Annual Meeting and Luncheon



This year’s CGN annual meeting and luncheon on March 21 moves to Mattison’s 41, at 7275 S. Tamiami Trail (between Clark Rd. and Sarasota Square Mall). Plenty of room for dining and parking, and the price is now only \$19.



Register by returning the form on the last page or online with easy payment by credit card through Eventbrite, at www.controlgrowthnow.org. **Bring your friends and family. We look forward to seeing you there!**

The menu features a choice of Rosemary and Lemon Honey Glazed Salmon, Chicken Piccata or Fresh Vegetable Medley, with Roasted Rosemary Red Potatoes and Assorted Cookies as well as coffee or tea. We will hear from our Citizen of the Year, Nokomis Area Civic Association President Bill Cantrell and candidates for local office, as well as an update on hot local issues. This is an event you will not want to miss!

Let's Do It -- High Time For Reform

The most important local contests are for three seats on the Sarasota County Commission. The Commission passed a redistricting scheme drafted for the Developer Cabal by convicted election fraud criminal Bob Waechter, to cut out both Republican and Democrat challengers, disenfranchise African American voters and divide voting blocs such as North Port (where the Cabal candidate does not live), to help incumbents and other Cabal candidates in 2020. A lawsuit challenges this action and the court has promised a ruling by May 1.

June 8 is the filing deadline to run for County Commission as well as other local offices. About 700 signatures of voters throughout the County are required to run for County Commission without a large filing fee. For partisan elections such as County Commission and Charter Review Board, the primary is August 18. The general election is November 3.

Two incumbent County Commissioners are up for reelection. The more vulnerable is Mike Moran, the worst of the five Commissioners in matters of concern to CGN, in District 1. If the court strikes down the redistricting, he will likely face a rematch of his 2016 race in the Republican primary with Frank DiCicco as well as Democrat challengers including Fredd Atkins. If the redistricting is upheld, there is at present no challenger to Moran in either party.

Incumbent Nancy Detert is also up for reelection, in a redrawn District 3. Although Commissioner Detert has voted at times with neighborhoods and the environment, she has led Cabal interests in matters such as redistricting and a Charter amendment which now makes it almost impossible for citizen initiatives. She is presently challenged in her new district by Republican and for-

mer Venice Mayor John Holic, and two young candidates, Republican Harrison Zeffert and Democrat Cory Hutchinson.

The third election is in District 5, an open seat due to term limits for Charles Hines. The Cabal candidate is financial consultant Ron Cutsinger, with a very pro-developer record on the County Planning Commission. Another very pro-developer candidate is former North Port Mayor Chris Hanks, who is also very pro-tax and has received substantial funding from Benderson Development and the Thomas Ranch developer of the West Villages in North Port. Cutsinger and Hanks are Republicans, as is candidate Joe Mason, an Englewood Realtor. Rumor has it that Hanks and Mason will withdraw in favor of Cutsinger before the primary and the Cabal will rely on Dark Money PAC funding for Cutsinger to make their support of him less apparent to voters, as they did for their candidates in last fall's Venice City Council elections. Long-time tree advocate and former CGN Citizen of the Year Alice White is running for the seat as a Democrat.



Five of the ten Charter Review Board seats will be on the primary and general election ballots. No signatures or filing fee is required to run. Each seat covers one-fifth of the County and residence in it is required to run, although the elections are County-wide. The Board has the power to put Charter amendments directly on the ballot, so it is an important body. Typically Bob Waechter puts together a slate for the Cabal. Presently, only principled candidate Alex Coe has filed for the open District 2 CRB seat, as a Republican, and Wilson Ayala is running as a Democrat in District 4.

Let's Do It -- High Time For Reform

Another important election will be on August 18, for two of the five seats on the Sarasota County School Board. Cabal PAC-man Eric Robinson is seeking reelection. The seat being vacated by Caroline Zucker is sought with heavy Cabal funding and support by Karen Rose as well as by David Graham, who to date has no contributions. Although it is a nonpartisan race, Robinson and Rose are Republicans and Graham is a Democrat. Good Republicans and Democrats should consider entering this race. If Robinson and Rose win, they will form a School Board majority with Bridget Ziegler to keep school impact fees at only one-fourth full funding, about the lowest in the state—or perhaps even eliminate them, and approve a huge bond issue to build schools east of the Interstate on the backs of the taxpaying public and while neglecting other facility needs of the School District.

In the City of Sarasota, incumbent Liz Alpert, who reliably supports developers and pro-congestion schemes by City staff, is being challenged in District 2 by former City Commissioner Terry Turner, a neighborhood and controlled-planning favorite, as well as activist Martin Hyde and pro-developer Jerry Wells. Principled incumbent Willie Shaw is to date unopposed in District 1 but development interests may back a challenger, possibly failed legislative candidate Ed James III. In District 3, Commissioner Shelli Freeland Eddie, who usually votes with the people, is apparently not running and the seat is being contested by attorney Erik Arroyo and landlord Daniel Clermont, whose positions on issues are as yet unclear. Although the elections are nonpartisan, Alpert, Turner, Shaw, James and Clermont are Democrats and Hyde, Wells and Arroyo are Republicans.

In Venice, incumbents Mitzi Fiedler, who has usually sided with the public interest, and Charles Newsom, who usually sides with developers, are up for reelection. (Congratulations to

controlled growth candidate Ron Feinsod on his election as Venice Mayor last November).

In North Port, David Carper and Richard Suggs are contesting for the District 1 City Commission seat, Barbara Langdon is running in District 2 and Jerry Nicastro in District 3. We have not yet determined their positions on the issues.

MAJOR ISSUES FACE COUNTY, CITIES

Elections have consequences.

In Sarasota County, Commissioners face competing plans to intensify urban sprawl or rein it in and choices between fixing broken sewer systems and road congestion or extending utility lines and roads to open up lands for new development.

In the City of Sarasota, Commissioners will decide whether to uproot the tree protection ordinance, increase densities or finally increase building setbacks.

In Venice, the City Council will soon debate a scheme for new Land Development Regulations which increase densities and building heights and otherwise favor developers.

In North Port, plans are afoot to rip out trees along a major boulevard.

In all jurisdictions, growth is not being made to pay its own way due to lowballed impact fees, neighborhoods are under assault by developers who seek to change the rules to their detriment and advisory boards that regulate development are stacked with developers and their allies.

It is to be expected that special interests will seek to elect politicians that they control — investing tens of thousands to reap millions in return. It is up to us to do what we can to thwart them, by finding and supporting candidates whose only interest is the public interest.

*The Pleasure of Your Company
Will Be Appreciated*

At The *Thirty-First Anniversary*

Control Growth Now Luncheon

Saturday, March 21, 2020

11:30 AM To 1:30 PM

Mattison's 41

7275 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota



Honoring Nokomis Area Civic Association President

Bill Cantrell

Control Growth Now *Citizen of the Year*

Reservations Required - Not Later Than 5 pm March 18, 2018

Return the Form on the Next Page or Register Online at controlgrowthnow.org

If Late Call 955-5622 - \$19 Each (Glazed Salmon, Chicken Piccata or Fresh Vegetable Medley)

Yes,

- count me in:

**CONTROL
GROWTH
NOW**



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

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

\$ _____ (**\$19each**) **Luncheon and annual meeting March 21**

Choose your entrée - Number: _____ Glazed Salmon
_____ Chicken Piccata
_____ Fresh Vegetable Medley

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

\$ _____ TOTAL

Thank You!

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

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

Name(s)	_____
Address	_____
Phone	_____
Email	_____

Alternatively, sign up at www.controlgrowthnow.org by clicking on the Luncheon and/or Membership links