



The Residents of Old Wilmington, Inc.

## *Neighborhood Messenger*

July 29, 2007

### **Gateway Rezoning Continued**

River 2 Sea, LLC scheduled its rezoning application for RFMU(CD) zoning before the City Planning Commission on July 11. At the last minute the matter was continued due to a defect in the petition concerning the ownership of land under the Memorial Bridge. The developer vows to bring the matter back at the August Planning Commission meeting on August 1.



About 40 ROW members attended an information and strategy session on June 25. *1.1 million square feet; 16,000 trips a day*

The members voted on a position that was communicated to the developer, commission and the City Council prior to the July 11. A “delegation” of ROW members met twice with the developer in an attempt to obtain revisions to his plans. For the ROW position statement click [Gateway](#). For video click [Video](#)

### **ROW Candidate Forum September 10!**

Marilyn Cantarella is busy preparing ROW’s Candidate forum for this November’s City elections. There will be three council seats and the Mayor’s seat in contention. Ian Moseley has graciously offered ROW the use of City Stage for the forum. Alan Smith has agreed to be the time keeper and Jon Evans, former news anchor from WWAY-TV3, will be the host/facilitator. ROW members may submit questions for the candidates by e-mailing them to [webmaster@ROWilmington.org](mailto:webmaster@ROWilmington.org) or in writing to any Board member or to Marilyn. Click [Election](#) for the candidates.

#### **Volunteers needed !!**

Marilyn needs some volunteer help - someone to assist with **publicity**, prepare tent cards for the candidates and will need several greeters the night of the forum. Please contact her to help with this important event. 343-5226

#### **NEXT MEMBER MEETING**

**When:** Sept. 12 ; **Time:** 7 p.m.; **Where:** Tileston School, 412 Ann St.

# What is the *Neighborhood Messenger*?

A long range goal of the ROW Board is to improve the dissemination of information to the members. The board felt that the monthly Newsletter did not give us enough space to transmit news and opinions.

The *Messenger* is a test this summer to meet this need. If the members like it, we will try to continue it on at least a quarterly basis.

**Want to contribute?** This first issues come solely from the Board. We intend the *Messenger* to be open to input from all members. Submit your articles, comments, photos etc. to Kevin O'Grady or other board member for inclusion in future issues. Our motto "All the news that fits, we print"

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## Second Back Door Kitchen Tour Oct. 6

ROW's second BDKT will be October 6, noon to 5 p.m. This year's original painting for the tour is by member Jenny McKinnon Wright. Her work will be revealed soon. Stay tuned for time and date!!!

The kitchens, the sponsors, and the ticket sale locations are lined up. Now all we need is you to volunteer as a docent, for ticket control, or for other help. Contact Gail Massey, 362-0517, if you have not yet signed up.

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## Initiatives Advance

### S. Third Street:

With the leadership of Robert Erb, the initiatives to bring change to S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street have advanced this summer:

ROW has met twice with City Traffic Engineer Jim Flechtner on the creation of a pedestrian crosswalk at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Ann St. Plans should soon be ready for a community meeting of interested neighborhood parties by this Fall.

Although the City has not budgeted funds for corridor beautification, ROW is working with the City to seek grant funds to improve lighting and safety in the corridor.

### Family Participation:

Mona Taylor has taken the lead on organizing a "Family Committee" to increase family participation in ROW. Contact her at [samonabeam@yahoo.com](mailto:samonabeam@yahoo.com).

## Secret Garden Tour Seeks Gardens:

The Lower Cape Fear Historical Society is seeking gardens to participate in the Secret Garden Tour this September. If interested, contact Candace McGreevy, (910) 762-0492

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## Planning Board Seeks New Members

Sherry Demas reports that there will be two vacancies on the City Planning commission in September.

Currently the Commission includes Johnny Hennigan, one banker, and 4 developers. It would be beneficial to this city if a member of ROW was on that commission as we all are very community and neighborhood minded.

Members of the appointment committee are Jim Quinn, Jason Thompson, and Lethia Hankins. Once you submit your application (with a little history about yourself) you could petition them of your intentions and request their support in their actions.

ROW really needs to be represented on this highly influential commission.

To apply, you can get an application from the secretary's office in the basement of Thalian Hall, or one can be downloaded. To download click [Boards](#) .  
*Let us know if you apply.*

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## Historic Wilmington Vanity Plate?

The Historic Wilmington Foundation is considering an initiative to institute a North Carolina Vanity auto plate for "Historic Wilmington." The process requires passage of a bill in Raleigh. After that, the plates will not be produced until there is at least 500 pre-sold (at about \$25 over the normal plate fee). HWF would like to know if there is sufficient interest in such a plate. Please e-mail HWF if you would be interested [garethevans@historicwilmington.org](mailto:garethevans@historicwilmington.org) . At best, the plate could not be available before the 2009 annual registration.

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## Dates to Remember

**September 10 ROW candidate forum, Level Five.**

**September 12, First Fall Members Meeting, Tileston School 7 p.m.**

**October 6, Backdoor Kitchen Tour, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.**

# NEWS Bits and Pieces

We are sad to report that long-time ROW member Captain John W. Wightman died on June 20, 2007 at the age of 66. In lieu of flowers please make a donation to the Lower Cape Fear Hospice & Life Care Center.

**EARRS Fund raiser:** The Eastern Area Radio Reading Service is holding a Bowling Event, Saturday August 4th, 1:30 to 4:30 at Cardinal Lanes North. Three games and shoe rental for \$10. All proceeds go to EARRS, the area's only radio reading service for the blind and print-impaired. It is a volunteer-run, and contributor supported nonprofit organization. Call 362-0903 for more information or see [www.earrs.org](http://www.earrs.org).

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Excerpt from Letter on ROW Gateway Position



The Residents of Old Wilmington, Inc.

July 10, 2007

RE: Gateway Project, CD-17-307

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

On July 11 you will be reviewing the Preliminary Site Assessment and Rezoning Application seeking to rezone 10.3 acres (including NCDOT right-of-way) at the foot of Memorial Bridge to River Front Mixed Use – Conditional District (RFMU-CD). This is the Gateway Project. This will be the first project submitted to you under this zoning class. As President of the Residents of Old Wilmington, Inc., I write to inform you of the position regarding the Gateway Project approved by the members of our organization in a recent membership meeting.

Our members recognize that development of some type is inevitable on this property. Although it is not without trepidation, our members would be able to support the Gateway project if there were one significant condition added to the seven conditions proposed by Staff. We hope that you will adopt this change as a prerequisite condition to the RFMU-CD zoning of this property.

## **The Project**

The Site Plan appears to present a Phased development. The site plan (Page 3) shows a dense 1,100,000 square foot mixed use hotel, condominium, and commercial tower south of the bridge (“South Tower”) and the footprint of a “Proposed Future Development (Phase II)” to the north (“North Tower”). This same page reports a property analysis of building footprint, and

residential density of The South Tower only. There is no property analysis of Phase II. In fact, there are no elevations or mention of Phase II except for the footprint outline. (In earlier plans The North Tower was a 221 foot mixed use building.) The South Tower impact will cause Queen and South Front Streets to fall to service level "F". The 16,000 daily trips from the South Tower will be shoehorned through the narrow historic streets of downtown Wilmington.

No one knows what the impact of the undefined North Tower will be.

### **A Planning Slight-of-Hand**

The Gateway Plan as submitted is a phased Conditional District. Under City code the owners of all the land are compelled to have the entire plan approved. (See Sec. 18-227. Plans and other information to accompany petition). Here the proposed plans exclude the Phase 2 North Tower from all calculations of building mass, traffic impact, and density. This makes the project appear of less neighborhood impact than it will be in fact. This slight-of-hand appears to be because, if Phase 2 is included in calculations, the impact would be such that neither you, nor any reasonable board, would approve the project due to its negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood. The developer has reduced the density calculation from 34 units per acre to 18 units per acre by excluding Phase 2. (Note: The adjoining residential areas are limited to 14.5) However, the footprint and reference to Phase II remain on the site plan. Therefore, neither you nor the citizens of Wilmington know what will be the ultimate scope of this project. At some future time when the developer (or subsequent developer) seeks to build the North Tower, they will certainly claim some vested right because the "Future" plan was on the site plan.

### **Exclude Phase II; commit to landscaped area.**

ROW has asked the developer to eliminate this waffling from the plans. ROW requested that the developer completely and irrevocably exclude the Phase 2 Tower from development and commit the footprint to landscaped public space in perpetuity, preferably by conservation easement in favor of a preservation non-profit. The City will then know the true ultimate scope of this project and the true trade-off of density for river front green space. Approval with this condition of approval (in addition to the seven conditions advanced by the Staff) would be acceptable to ROW.

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### **Certainty and Fairness**

The citizens of Wilmington and the City government are entitled to be certain about the ultimate scope and density of this project. Thus far, the developer has not agreed to make his ultimate plans clear. As a result, ROW will likely speak in "opposition" to the project, to seek this important condition and bring certainty to the development plan.

We will ask the Board to add the above condition to those proposed by the Staff.

Sincerely,  
Residents of Old Wilmington, Inc.  
By Kevin O'Grady, President

## Wilmington Candidates

### Mayor

Justin LaNasa, 36, 13 Market St., Wilmington. Occupation: owner of Hardwire Tattoos & Body Piercing. Political affiliation: unknown. Political experience: none.

Harper Peterson, 58, 212 Orange St., Wilmington. Occupation: businessman. Political affiliation: Democrat. Political experience: mayor 2001-03.

Bill Saffo, 46, 1807 Odyssey Drive, Wilmington. Occupation: Broker in charge of Hanover Realty. Political affiliation: Democrat. Political experience: elected as council member in 2003; appointed mayor in 2006.

### City Council (three seats)

Susan E. Clarke, 53, 3406 Bethel Road, Wilmington. Occupation: attorney. Political experience: previously ran unsuccessfully for local office.

Michael DeHart, 50, 3409 Sparrow Hawk Court, Wilmington. Other information was not immediately available.

Kevin Joseph Delahunty, 62, 1410 Bexley Drive, Wilmington. Other information was not immediately available.

Pat Delair, 53, 511 N. Third St., Wilmington. Occupation: former downtown business owner. Political affiliation: Democrat. Political experience: elected to city council last October in a special election.

Charles Denson Jr., 42, 4616 Fillmore Drive, Wilmington. Other information was not immediately available.

Andy Koeppel, 3409 Red Berry Drive. Occupation: Realtor. Political affiliation: Republican. Political experience: served on the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority board.

Jeffrey S. Kohl, 39, 1181 Brougham Drive, Wilmington. Occupation: owns Kohl's Frozen Custard. Political experience: previously ran unsuccessfully for local office.

Ricky Meeks, 38, 3610 Caswell St., Wilmington. Occupation: on disability. Political affiliation: Republican. Political experience: has run unsuccessfully for political office numerous times and member of mayor's committee for people with disabilities.

Laura Padgett, 58, 210 Castle St. Occupation: financial consultant. Political affiliation: Democrat. Political experience: three terms on Wilmington City Council.

Ronald Sparks, 52, 206 N. 13th St., Wilmington. Occupation: professional engineer. Political experience: none.

Kristi Tomey, 38, 6420 Green Arbor Lane, Wilmington. Occupation: project manager with IBM. Political experience: ran for city council in 2003.

J. Todd Turner, 35, 4905 Pine St., Wilmington. Other information was not immediately available.

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***Neighborhood Messenger***

Contact us; send some news; write an article; tell us what you think.

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