



**Middle River Terrace
Neighborhood Association**

P.O. Box 4561
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33338

1/3/2016

Dear Residents and Members of Middle River Terrace Neighborhood Association;

Our Association is the Fort Lauderdale Neighborhood, not for profit, Official Organization. You may view the listing at the Fort Lauderdale web site:

<http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/neighbors/civic-associations>

All **Residents** are encouraged to attend the Board of Directors and/or the general meetings whenever possible. All issues brought before the Association either by e-mail or at one of our meetings are addressed with all Government Officials or City Departments that have jurisdiction over the issue. **It is not necessary for you to be a paid member of the Association.** Paid membership supports and pays for Neighborhood expenses, participate in any issues to be voted on and have the ability to nominate candidates for office or run for office.

Leadership of MRTNA are neighbors that are nominated and elected democratically each year.

In the past four years, thanks to an amazing group of Board of Directors and Committees, we have achieved giant steps forward to a revitalized and amazing neighborhood.

There are several projects that are coming finally into fruition in 2016:

1 – DIXIE HWY BEAUTIFICATION AND SAFETY PROJECT:

This particular project took almost four years of planning it. A few members of the Board spent the majority of our past four years to advocate and attend an untold number of meetings with all of the Fort Lauderdale Commissioners, Mayor and the Director of the Broward County MPO in order to make it possible and now we are finally very close to breaking ground. We were able to obtain almost 4 million dollars for this project alone. The Fort Lauderdale Department of Transportation has estimated that the ground breaking will occur during August 2016. This project will create sidewalks the entire length and on both sides of Dixie Highway, safe, raised paved crosswalks, bike lanes, sustainable landscape, new lighting, a roundabout at the NE 16 Ct intersection, and new beautiful entrance monuments. This is an amazing beautification that will transform our Neighborhood in one of the most desirable to live.

The funding for the main project included 2 entrance monuments and funds were won by our neighborhood from the City for additional monuments to replace all of the old plain placard neighborhood signs, thanks to the success of the past four years administration that attended all necessary meetings successfully applying for the grants and volunteer many hours for matching grant points.

2–Removal of the ugly chain link fence at the curve of NE 7 Avenue before Home Depot:

The fence was originally installed to prevent crossing the FEC RR tracks. Our BOD, working with City Officials, and the Lake Ridge BOD, complained instead that it was a trash collector, created an overall blight and people were crossing the tracks by slashing and tearing holes in the

fence. The City agreed to remove the fence and low bushes and plant trees for a major improvement.

3 – I personally launched Next Door in our Neighborhood:

It took a couple of years of my free time to develop it as strong as is today. Nextdoor facilitates communication among our neighbors and builds a safer and stronger community.

On Next Door, members can:

Share local recommendations (plumbers, auto mechanics, babysitters, etc.)

Sell or give away household items.

Publicize local events.

Exchange information about crime and safety issues.

Find neighbors in the directory.

View a neighborhood map.

Share opinions to help build a stronger and safer neighborhood.

4 – Environment and quality of life:

One of the projects that a few members of the BOD were able to obtain are new signs that will encourage our residents and visitors to preserve the quality our air, park and river.

One great success story is the “Lung at Play” or “Thank you for not smoking” sign that it will be soon installed at Middle River Terrace Park. The BOD worked together with different health organizations and the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Association (Who also represents all recognized Neighborhood Associations in the City). We were able to collect \$1,000.00 for the purchasing of those signs. We were able to have the money donated to the city of Fort Lauderdale and the Council selected our Park to be part of this Pilot Program initiative. What it appears to be such an easy task, it took one year of attending meetings , and advocating for our community to the City of Fort Lauderdale, the CFLCA and many other health organization that promote smoke free environments.

This sign at the park will encourage our visitors to refrain from smoking, setting an educational example for the younger generation, preserving clean air and cleaner park from cigarette butts, The second sign is the one at the neighborhood dock on 8th Ave.. Neighbors complained to us concerning Alcohol, Vagrancy and most of all, loud music and talking that disturbed the peace and tranquility of our residents along the river. The BOD working together with the City Manager and the Neighborhood Department of the City to come up with the design and wording on the dock sign that is within the law and the fact it is a public thoroughfare providing access for the public from 8th Ave. to the Middle River. The original sign was vandalized twice and then stolen/removed. MRTNA BOD come up with new ideas like:

We worked together collecting inputs from our residents and we just had confirmation from the Fort Lauderdale City Manager that the new sign will be soon installed. We have been working with Dean Trantalis concerning the condition of the dock and the dredging that needs to be done and a device to allow using the dock as a launching point for kayaks. Dean told our board that he had \$20,000 able to spend to repair the dock, reinstall the original lighting and add a device to enable the dock to be used for launching kayaks. Instead other persons put deck paint over rotten wood and declared the dock “fixed”, which it is far from fixed, and the Association will still press for those improvements.

5 – Crime Statistics:

Are steadily going down and are right now incredibly low. MRTNA had never had such as low crime rates! Just a couple of years ago there were 100 home burglaries in our neighborhood.

There are still a few, and the MRTNA will not be satisfied until it is -0-.

Our partnership with the Police Dept. in various new initiatives such as Smartwater, advocating on Next Door and our new rebranded crime meetings to bring the community and police

together to discuss issues of importance and the relationship we had formed with our community officers helped to prevent crime in our neighborhood. Next Door also helped tremendously the awareness of an immediate crime or suspicious persons in our neighborhood.

6-Safety:

As President, even though new lighted crosswalks were included, I petitioned the Transportation Department for over a year to move up the installation of 2 lighted crosswalks (the only legal Dixie Highway crossing between 13th St. and the Dixie Highway Bridge.) If someone is struck by a vehicle anywhere else, it will be declared their fault sue to not using a crosswalk. A couple of years ago a person was struck and killed near 16th Street and the victim was declared at fault.

7 – Quiet Zones:

The BOD was the first to initiate the awareness of quiet zones and made presentations to all the Commissioners, Mayor and the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization, even before the All Aboard Florida was announced.

8- Neighborhood Appearance:

Cleaning up the entrance signs and the pruning and cleaning of the entrance tree located on the side of the bridal shop at Dixie Highway and 13th St. Applying for and receiving an Adopt-A-Street designation for NE 8th Ave. and NE 18th Street.

9- Green Your Routine Program One of our committees is the GYR program, successfully introduced by one of our members is now a major source of available volunteer initiatives that enable our association to exchange hours of donated volunteer work into dollars to be spend on green initiatives and increase the Association's funds. Our goal is to fill the gaps along the high school fences with green edges. We already donated several checks and the school already has purchased and planted bougainvillea along their boundary. This also created awareness at the Fort Lauderdale High school that trees and green way was necessary to beautify the fence line for safety and blight issues.

The above projects are just few of so many others that it will take too long to list them all. This year many new initiatives are in the making.

The first one is the MRTNA 2016 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE PARTY on Thursday, January 14, 2016 at WARSAW COFFEE COMPANY on NE 13 Street.

It's so important to register as members and be informed with real facts regarding what is going to happen and what we have done so far in our community. Your loyalty and help is the key to make our neighborhood safer, stronger and more beautiful.

It will be a great opportunity for us to know you, listening to your input and celebrate our new and amazing year together! I hope to see all of our residents at our meetings.

Wishing you the very best always,
Laura Croscenco
MRTNA President