

Florence

FLORENCE

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NEWS & HAPPENINGS FROM THE CITY OF FLORENCE & ITS UTILITY SYSTEMS · FALL 2004

CITY PROJECTS BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO FLORENCE

BROWNFIELDS REDEVELOPMENT AND DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

THE FORMER BUSH RECYCLING PROPERTY LOCATED NEAR SUMTER AND IRBY STREETS IS THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE CITY OF FLORENCE'S BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT PROJECT.



Over the next several months, the City of Florence will conduct an environmental site evaluation and engage the community in redevelopment planning through September 2005 with the Brownfields Assessment Project. In June 2003, the City of Florence received a \$200,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to implement this project. The EPA provides grant funding to local governments to address brownfields, which are abandoned and underutilized industrial and commercial properties. Funds also pay for health monitoring, community outreach activities and redevelopment planning efforts.

The City will use the grant to primarily focus on select properties within the "Triangle" area, with an emphasis on the former Bush Recycling property, located near Sumter and Irby streets. Working with community members, the City will clean up the property and plan for its future use. The City of Florence purchased the Bush Recycling property in November 2003 and signed a voluntary clean-up contract with the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control in March 2004.

In early October, the demolition of The Inn Downtown and Investor's Savings Bank on West Palmetto and West Cheves Streets in downtown Florence took place. Both structures were torn down as part of the City

(Continued on page 3)

BOARD ADVISES FLORENCE ON STORMWATER ISSUES

The City of Florence created its Stormwater Advisory Board in 2000 to seek input and advice from its citizens. Comprised of local developers, realtors, engineers and other interested parties, the board assists the City of Florence in meeting the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency's Stormwater Phase II management program.

The Stormwater Phase II program is the next step in the EPA's effort to preserve, protect and improve the nation's water resources from polluted stormwater. Polluted stormwater is rainwater that has traveled

across streets and parking lots where it picks up pollutants such as automobile oil, animal waste, excess lawn care fertilizers and other debris before emptying into streams and rivers. The goal of the Phase II program is to reduce the amount of stormwater pollutants entering rivers and streams.

The EPA issued Stormwater Phase II in October 1999. The program relies on the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit coverage to address stormwater run-off from smaller municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) in

urbanized areas and smaller construction sites. The objective of the Stormwater Phase II program for cities, is to establish long-term stormwater activities and projects that fulfill the six NPDES permit requirements.

For more information on the land development regulations or how to prevent stormwater pollution, please contact the Stormwater Operations Division at (843) 665-3236.

City To Assume Recycling Responsibilities

In an effort to cut down on costs and continue curbside convenience, the City of Florence is handling recycling collection services for residents within the city limits.

The City has begun managing recycling collection services with a new vehicle and an additional employee.

The recycling collection process will remain relatively the same. Residents will use the same recycling bins with new City of Florence decals and will have the same curbside collection schedule. The only difference may be the type of items collected. By operating its own recycling program, the City of Florence will save about \$200,000, which will be redirected to other needs throughout the city.

For more information, please contact the City of Florence Public Works Department at (843) 665-3236.

City of Florence Recyclable Materials List

Rinse all containers before placing in recycling bin.

- Plastic (#1 and #2 - such as milk jugs, green beverage bottles, water jugs)
- Aluminum (foil, food containers, beverage cans)
- Tin (steel and bi-metal food and beverage containers)
- Newspaper and Newspaper Inserts
- Magazines and Phone Books
- White Paper (junk mail, notebook paper, computer paper)

Recycling Not Handled by City of Florence

Glass • Cardboard • Brown Paper
While these materials are not collected by the City of Florence, they may be collected at the Florence County drop sites. For more information about locations, call (843) 665-3022 or visit www.florencecounty.org/recycle/locations.htm.

Florence Trains Firefighters, Advances Certification Level

City of Florence firefighters have been training for more than 200 hours to increase their certification level.

In 2001, Chief Joseph Robertson began an effort to get all fire personnel certified as National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Level II firefighters, which is the most current level of Fire Service training available nationwide. Currently, 89% of the department's personnel are certified at this level. Those that did not receive this certification were unable to attend classes due to service in Iraq, injury or other reasons, but will soon be attending classes to achieve this level.

"I don't know of any other fire department in South Carolina that has this high percentage of their personnel certified as NFPA Level II," said Robertson. "A lot of this credit goes to the fire training coordinator, Shannon Tanner, who devised the training program."

Classes were given by the South Carolina Fire Academy and include Hazardous Materials Operations, Basic Auto Extrication, and Flammable Liquids Firefighting.

Founded in 1896, the NFPA is an international nonprofit organization with more than 75,000 members and serves as the world's leading advocate of fire prevention and is an authoritative source on public safety.

For more information, check out the association website at www.nfpa.org.



CITY WORKS TO CONNECT TRAIL SYSTEM AND PROVIDE OPTIONS FOR ALTERNATE ROUTES OF TRAVEL

The City of Florence recently received preliminary approval for an Enhancement Grant for the Florence Area Transportation Study Committee. The grant, which has been submitted to the South Carolina Department of Transportation for final approval, involves the construction of three trails that interconnect with the existing rail trail. The addition of these trails will provide Florence residents a place to enjoy family activities that promote health and fitness. They also provide a safe way for pedestrians and cyclists to exercise, as well as create alternate routes of travel to various areas of interest throughout the city.

"The projects are a continuation of the Florence Rail Trail that has become one of the area's most popular attractions," said David Williams, Florence City Manager. "Elected officials have been extremely supportive of the City's efforts in trail development and the enhancements that trails provide to our quality of life."

The trail extensions include linking the current rail trail westward to the Live Oak subdivision and Oakdale Country Club, northwest to the Civic Center and north to West Florence High School and Magnolia Mall. The trail will consist of both natural and paved surfaces. Beautification and buffering

will occur along various portions of the trail to create a pleasing and peaceful setting for its users. With the grant funding, the City of Florence will incur the cost and be responsible for the work on these projects.

Through the work and dedication of many individuals, much has been accomplished in trail development in the Florence area. The Doctors Bruce and Lee Foundation granted the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control - Pee Dee Health District \$120,000 for the past two years to assist with the development and coordination of the Florence Trails Program. Senator Hugh Leatherman has provided state funding for the June National Trails Day promotions for the past two years. McLeod Health and Fitness has sponsored the National Trails Day events the past three years. The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control has provided Florence County assistance in the Florence Area Bikeway Master Plan.

Other groups that have been instrumental in advising the City of Florence on these projects include Florence Trails Committee, Florence County/Municipal Planning Department, Fitness Forum, McLeod Health and Fitness Center, Florence



YMCA, Florence County School District One, Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service, S.C. DHEC, along with various citizen groups, businesses and individual interests, such as civic and biking clubs.

The Florence Rail Trail, which opened National Trails Day on June 1, 2002, is a pedestrian / bicycle trail along an abandoned rail corridor with connections to a residential neighborhood, Ebenezer Park and Sneed Middle School. It is one of 12 in the state. The trail is open to the public from dawn to dusk and is approximately two miles long.

For more information, contact the City of Florence Parks and Leisure Services Department at (843) 665-3253.

CITY OFFERS FREE COMPOST AND MULCH

While getting ready for the fall season, City of Florence water and sewer customers can take advantage of free "Flo-Gro" compost and mulch.

Since 1994, the City of Florence has been making compost at the wastewater plant to eliminate sludge waste. Compost is a rich, loamy mixture consisting of decayed organic matter. A

soil enhancer, compost is widely used for fertilizing and conditioning landscaping.

At the City's Public Works Department, mulch is created from yard waste and tree clippings. Mulch is beneficial to suppress weeds and retain moisture.

Both compost and mulch may be

picked up from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Compost is available at the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant on Stockade Road and mulch is available at the City's Public Works Department on McCurdy Road. For more information, please contact the Public Works Department at (843) 665-3236.

SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS ENCOURAGE POSITIVE MENTORSHIP

This summer, the City of Florence Police Department implemented two programs geared toward positive mentorship of youth in the City of Florence. Three weekend sessions of Camp FEVER (Fuel to Encourage a Victorious and Evolving Resurrection) were held at the Circle Park Prevention Center's Four Oaks camp site located just outside of the city in the Quinby

community. The City of Florence Police Department also held three week-long basketball day camps at the Williams Middle School gymnasium.

Teenagers targeted for Camp FEVER came from different areas of the city and were mostly referrals from the Department of Juvenile Justice. During the camp, youngsters were exposed to a variety of activities and one-on-one

mentoring with a police officer. Upon their arrival, the campers assisted in setting up tents, preparing meals and getting to know each other as well as the camp leaders. On the Saturday of each Camp FEVER session, the teens had a session of physical fitness training followed by breakfast.

The City of Florence plans to expand each of these programs next year.

CITY PROJECTS BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO FLORENCE (continued from page 1)

of Florence's commitment to downtown revitalization, which began with the relocation of the Bush Recycling facility from the corner of North Irby and Lucas Streets. The Drs. Bruce and Lee Foundation funded the demolition through a grant award to the City of Florence and the contract for the demolition was awarded to Empire Dismantlement Corporation.

The overall goal of the Brownfields Assessment Project is to promote revitalization of Florence's downtown area through the redevelopment of brownfields.

"We're hoping to promote economic growth by redeveloping key brownfield properties within the City of Florence," said Frank Willis, Mayor of Florence. "This will be accomplished by enhancing community awareness, performing environmental assessments and conducting redevelopment planning."

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

The City of Florence is pursuing revitalization of its downtown area through a series of key elements with the Downtown

Revitalization Strategy. These elements include design guidelines for identity, architecture, and public improvement.

The Florence downtown area will be revitalized over the course of three phases and includes the downtown center (14 blocks), the arts and cultural district (12 blocks) and the historical district, which includes the area between Baroody Street, Irby Street, Evans Street and Dargan Street.

"Builders, developers, homeowners and art groups can work with city officials and be assured that their investment and contributions will not only be protected," said George Jebaily, chairman of the Florence Downtown Development Corporation, "but their contributions will become reinforcement to the whole."

Phase I of the plan will mainly include the preparation of Design Guidelines, establishment of Overlay Zoning Districts, completion of various analyses and other technical work. The completion of Phase I will pave the way for Phase II, which will include project-based financial feasibility analysis, funding strategies and other implementation steps. Together, Phase I and Phase II of the Downtown Revitalization

Strategy will result in tangible improvements in and around the urban core of the City.

Some of the key elements of the revitalization strategy include the establishment of a unified, improved identity for downtown Florence, the expansion of historic character and the formation of traditional "Town Center" elements throughout downtown.

While it is not mandatory that historic buildings be renovated and it is not necessary for nonconforming buildings to be removed, any improvements to existing buildings and new buildings will be required to meet the standards of the newly adopted design guidelines. Some of the public improvement elements include improving the sidewalks, hiding the utilities along main roads, planting street trees, and redesigning signage.

The revitalization strategy includes several efforts such as a Downtown Master Plan, a City Wide Structure Plan, the formation of the Florence Downtown Development Corporation, implementation of various community-based outreach programs, acquisition of distressed properties, and the development of a Downtown Florence Revitalization Strategy.

Florence Recognized On CNN's Headline News

The City of Florence was recently showcased as one of the "Champions of Industry" for excellence in business practices and aired on the CNN's Headline News network.

According to Jim Nance, who hosted the program, the City of Florence has a small town feel that offers big city amenities as well as a unique blend of industry, beauty and community. Florence provides residents with an outstanding quality of life. The "Champions of Industry" show featured a short history of Florence and current projects, as well as interviews with City Manager David Williams, Mayor Frank Willis, and Mayor Pro Tem Billy Williams, among others. The program also highlighted the consolidation of city and county water services as well as construction of the new regional surface water treatment plant. The video also featured local industries, outstanding hospital systems, retail shopping opportunities and the excellent residential communities throughout Florence.

For the past eight years, Pat Summerall Productions, a full-service video and television production company, has produced "Champions of Industry" and nationally recognizes hundreds of organizations for their integrity, ingenuity and proven leadership as well as their outstanding achievements and positive contributions to corporate America.

The City of Florence video has already aired, but may be viewed at any time on the City of Florence website at www.cityofflorence.com or at www.industryview.com.



NICKELODEON ENCOURAGES CHILDREN TO GET OUT AND PLAY IN FLORENCE

NICKELODEON'S "LET'S JUST PLAY" CAMPAIGN ATTRACTED THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN TO PLAY AT TIMROD PARK ON AUGUST 21, 2004. MAYOR FRANK E. WILLIS SPOKE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILDREN'S OUTDOOR RECREATION.



Children from the Florence area participated in Nickelodeon's "Let's Just Play" event at Timrod Park on August 21.

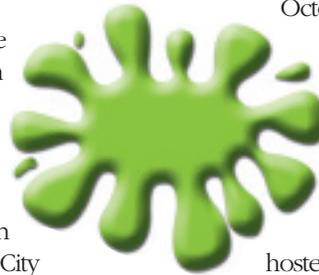
More than 4,500 people attended the event and several thousand children participated in the games and activities, which included broomstick hockey, a rolling bed relay, and tug-of-war.

"I just want to thank Nickelodeon for including Florence in their campaign route," said Frank E. Willis, Mayor of the City of Florence. "The well-being and health of our children is a major part of the quality of life for Florence. "Let's Just Play" demonstrated the benefits of playing and I encourage everyone to help improve children's lives by engaging them in creative playtime."

Nickelodeon's "Let's Just Play" is the network's national campaign dedicated to promoting fun, sportsmanship, team spirit and fitness. The "Let's Just Play" campaign is a part of Nickelodeon's effort to get children more physically active and to encourage

positive, healthy and playful lifestyles.

Worldwide Day of Play was October 2, 2004. The



campaign has also made stops in Houston, Spokane, Kansas City, Los Angeles and Miami.

The event was hosted by the City of Florence and sponsored by the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Pee Dee area and Time Warner Cable.

ABOUT LET'S JUST PLAY

Nickelodeon's "Let's Just Play" campaign, now in its second year, is the network's pro-social grassroots campaign encouraging kids to engage in healthy, active lifestyles. In its first year, "Let's Just Play" traveled to seven U.S. cities, where more than 50,000 children collectively spent the day outside in a safe, healthy environment.

INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S GAMES



From July 30 to August 2, 2004, the International Children's Games (ICG) were held in Cleveland, Ohio. In its third year participating in the ICG, the City of Florence sent 19 athletes (ages ranging from 12 to 15) and 11 adult representatives. The athletes participated in tennis, basketball, swimming and track events. Florence was the only South Carolina city represented at the ICG.

To learn more about the International Children's Games, please go to www.childrens-games.org for information.

THE CITY OF FLORENCE CELEBRATED PATRIOT'S DAY



September 11, 2004 - The third annual Pee Dee Patriotic Parade featured the 82nd Airborne Division Band and the University of North Carolina-Pembroke marching band. More than 10,000 American flags were handed out to spectators. The parade traveled down W. Evans Street toward the downtown area and had more than 180 units involved.

Florence City Council

Frank E. Willis,
Mayor

Billy D. Williams,
District 1

Edward Robinson,
District 2

Maitland S. Chase, III,
District 3

William C. Bradham, Jr.,
Member-At-Large

Robert C. Holland, Jr.,
Member-At-Large

Richard L. Woodard,
Member-At-Large

City Council and the Mayor serve four-year terms. City Council meets the second Monday of every month at 1 p.m. in Room 604 at the City-County Complex, 180 North Irby Street, Florence, SC.

www.cityofflorence.com

Inside This Issue

City Projects Breathe New Life	Pg. 1
Florence On Stormwater Issues	Pg. 1
Florence On Discovery Channel	Pg. 3
Summer Youth Programs	Pg. 2
City Works to Connect Trail System ..	Pg. 2
International Children's Games	Pg. 4
Free Compost and Mulch	Pg. 2
Get Out and Play	Pg. 4



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