



# EAST TAMPA Redevelopment News

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# EAST TAMPA Redevelopment News

MARCH 2013



Transforming East Tampa into a vibrant residential and business community with recreational, social, and cultural life.

## Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

### Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Board

- Frank Reddick ..... District 5 ..... *Chairperson*
- Mike Suarez ..... District 1 ..... *Vice-Chairperson*
- Yvonne Yolie Capin ..... District 3 At-Large
- Harry Cohen ..... District 4
- Charlie Miranda ..... District 6
- Lisa J. Montelione ..... District 7
- Mary Mulhern ..... District 2 At-Large

**Meeting Location:** 315 E. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa

**Time:** 9 a.m.

**Dates:** March 21, April 18, May 16

### Community Advisory Committee

- Essie Sims, Jr. .... *Chairperson*
- Richdean Hills-Ackbar .... *Vice Chairperson*
- Curtis Brown
- David Denson, Sr.
- Kim Headland
- Deborah Lawson
- Carrol Josephs-Marshall
- Elizabeth Nelson
- Jeraldine Williams-Shaw
- Thad Smith

**Meeting Location:** Economic Development Office  
TPD III, 3808 N. 22nd Street, Tampa

**Time:** 9:30 a.m.

**Dates:** March 5, April 2, May 7

## Your Neighborhood Connection

Twelve neighborhood associations in East Tampa are actively working to ensure a safe and vibrant community. Contact your neighborhood leader and get involved today. For more information, contact the neighborhood president directly by email.

College Hill Civic Association

Cynthia Few [fblckbeauty3@yahoo.com](mailto:fblckbeauty3@yahoo.com)

East Tampa Business & Civic Association

Janee Murphy [janee12371@aol.com](mailto:janee12371@aol.com)

Eastern Heights Neighborhood Association

Sam Mobley [smsam1@verizon.net](mailto:smsam1@verizon.net)

Florence Villa/Beasley/Oak Park Civic Association

Barbara McGill [bmcgill1@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:bmcgill1@tampabay.rr.com)

Grant Park Civic Association and Watch Group

Ralph Johnson [Ralphj0103@yahoo.com](mailto:Ralphj0103@yahoo.com)

Highland Pines Community Task Force

Betty Bell [Bellsystem5@verizon.net](mailto:Bellsystem5@verizon.net)

Northeast Community Crimewatch & Civic Assoc.

Joel Barnum [jbar1952@verizon.net](mailto:jbar1952@verizon.net)

Northview Hills Civic Association

Gloria Taylor, Interim President [glotay23@verizon.net](mailto:glotay23@verizon.net)

Old Seminole Heights Neighborhood Association

Evan St. Ives [astives1@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:astives1@tampabay.rr.com)

Rainbow Heights Neighborhood Association  
& Crimewatch

Frankie Jones [Frankie.Jones@SDHC.K12.FL.US](mailto:Frankie.Jones@SDHC.K12.FL.US)

Southeast Seminole Heights Civic Association

Sherry Genovar-Simmons [genovar.simmons@seschca.com](mailto:genovar.simmons@seschca.com)

V.M. Ybor Neighborhood Association

Kelly Bailey [KellyBailey@vmybor.org](mailto:KellyBailey@vmybor.org)

Woodland Terrace Neighborhood Association

Ruth Fleming [1flemingjr@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:1flemingjr@tampabay.rr.com)

## MetroRapid Coming in 2013

Nebraska Avenue, the eastern boundary of the East Tampa CRA neighborhood, will soon have transformed bus service through HART's MetroRapid service. The 17.5 mile North/South corridor will feature 12 MetroRapid buses and nearly 60 stations along the route from downtown Tampa, along Nebraska Avenue (running North/South) and along Fletcher Avenue (running East/West).

MetroRapid riders will enjoy significant benefits from the new service including fewer stops which improves travel-time savings. GPS-based technology will extend green lights and shorten red lights, reducing schedule delays and improving the reliability of service. The low-floor buses offer a comfortable ride for both passengers and drivers. On weekdays, 5 a.m. – 8 p.m. buses will offer 15-minute service between downtown and the University Area Transit Center and 30-minute service between UATC and Hidden River Regional Park-n-Ride. It will take approximately 55 minutes to ride the route end-to-end.

In East Tampa, ticket-vending machine equipped stations will be on each side of Hillsborough Avenue and M.L. King Jr. Boulevard. Additional stations will be on each side of Lake and Floribaska Avenues and Columbus Drive. All stations will feature covered seating, bicycle racks, and passenger information.

At the northeast end of the line, near Telecom Park, the Hidden River Regional Park-n-Ride will offer 320 parking spaces for commuters wishing to park and ride to the University, Downtown Tampa, and points along the way.

For more information about MetroRapid, visit [gohart.org/metrorapid/](http://gohart.org/metrorapid/).

## Enterprise Zone

Did you know East Tampa is an Enterprise Zone? An Enterprise Zone is a state-designated geographical area targeted for economic revitalization. Tax incentives are offered to businesses and people in the zone to encourage economic development and investment.

New and existing businesses, or any property owner who builds new or renovates, and is in the zone boundaries, may qualify for various incentives such as job tax credits, business equipment sales tax refund, property tax credit building materials sales tax refund, and more.

Find out more by contacting the Enterprise Zone Coordinators, Ed Johnson (813) 242-3806 [Ed.Johnson@tampagov.net](mailto:Ed.Johnson@tampagov.net), or Lynn Schultz (813) 914-4008 [schultzl@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:schultzl@hillsboroughcounty.org).



East Tampa's 5th annual tree lighting celebration was held December 14, 2012 at the Cyrus Green Community Center. Students from area schools were on hand to meet Santa

Claus and receive bicycles and other goodies donated by the event sponsors and Tampa engineering firm, CH2MHILL. Chloe Coney, district director for U.S. Representative Kathy Castor, was guest speaker at the event organized by the Aesthetics & Beautification Sub-Committee of the East Tampa Community Revitalization Partnership.

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## Façade Grant Contributes to Restoration of Historic Building

East Tampa's 12th façade grant was awarded to Design Styles Architecture, a 20-person Clearwater architecture firm that relocated their headquarters from Clearwater to East Tampa in February.

"We purchased the Ybor V.M. grocery store building last year at 1708 E. Columbus Drive," said Andy Dohmen, AIA, and Design Styles' principal.

"The 5,000 square foot building was vacant for nearly a decade and required extensive interior and exterior renovations to repair fire and termite damage."

"Our restoration costs were around \$400,000, and the \$50,000 façade grant was a huge help," notes Dohmen. "We stayed true to

the 1930 building's history and fabric, using the same decorative molding, wood replacement windows, and original tile in the baths and kitchen, while incorporating a new roof, reinforced exterior wall, entire second floor reconstruction, new electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and air conditioning systems. The restoration was built according to LEED Gold standards, and is Tampa's first historic property renovated to that standard."

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) conformance contributes to a community's smart growth and is the rating system for the design, construction, and performance of green buildings. "We left a 3,000 square foot building and moved to a 5,000 square foot building in East Tampa. Our utility bill should decrease by half due to incorporating LEED energy-efficient standards," said Dohmen.

An open house is planned for March and the community is invited. For details, visit [DesignStylesInc.com](http://DesignStylesInc.com) or call (813) 241-6700.



## Ragan Park – A Playspace for All Ages

It takes a community to build a great playground and that's what happened at Ragan Park. Thanks to funding by healthcare company



Humana and the East Tampa CRA, and through the efforts and support of Mayor Bob Buckhorn, the V.M. Ybor Neighborhood Association, the East Tampa Community Revitalization Partnership, and KaBoom!, a national non-profit dedicated to saving play, Ragan Park has a new, one-of-a-kind, multigenerational playground.

The effort kicked off in May with a get together facilitated by a professional playground designer from KaBoom!, for community children and adults to contribute ideas and planning for their dream playground. Elements of interest to seniors and adults such as fitness stations and walking paths were combined in the planning with traditional kid-friendly playground equipment. On August 11, 2012, Mayor Buckhorn and more than 200 volunteers came out to build the new playground, a feat accomplished in six hours.

Moms, dads, grandparents and kids – check out the fun at Ragan Park at 1200 E Lake Avenue. Not only is there something for everyone, but the park also has a community center which can be rented for events, and picnic area.

## Let's Curb Illegal Dumping

"Illegal dumping is on the rise in East Tampa," said the City of Tampa police department's Environmental Detective Gary Pruitt. "We are fighting it with mobile technology – solar powered cameras that we can move around. But dumping hot spots are really a moving target and we need the eyes of the community too. Vacant property is really at risk for dumping. People driving by see a little trash and think it is OK to unload larger items, and immediately, it becomes an eyesore."

East Tampa residents can make a difference with just two easy steps:

1. **Report it.** If you see illegal dumping in progress, write down the tag number and call the Tampa Police non-emergency number at (813) 231-6130. You can also call Detective Pruitt's office at (813) 242-8450 or his city cell (813) 480-5630.

2. **Get it collected.**

**If it is on the city right-of-way:** After the Police Department has responded, call the Department of Solid Waste and Environmental Program management at (813) 348-1111, x3.

**If it is on private property:** Report it to the Department of Code Enforcement (813) 274-5545.

Let's all work together to keep East Tampa clean and beautiful!

## Hillsborough and 30th Street Improvements

Improvements to correct decades of flooding issues at the intersection of Hillsborough Avenue and 30th Street are complete. Updated storm drains, repaving, and intersection improvements, along with increasing the capacity of the stormwater pond at 30th Street and Osborne Avenue should make transit safer and easier through the intersection on future rainy days.

## 22nd Street Transforming to Complete Street



22nd Street is really shaping up as a "complete street." According to Smart Growth America, "Complete streets... are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and

transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work." New signals, cross walks, sidewalks and trails, upgrades to bus stops and shelters, contribute to 22nd Street's complete street status and offer a safer environment for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Work is progressing well. Phase II-A, between 23rd and 26th Avenues is complete. Phase II-B, between 26th Street and Lake Avenue began in Spring 2012, and should be complete in June 2013. During Phase III, a new roundabout will be constructed at the intersection of 21st Avenue and 22nd Street. Roundabout construction is underway and expected to be completed by year-end.

When finished, 22nd Street will well serve current and future needs of East Tampa residents, whether they are walking, using public transportation, or traveling by bike or car. In addition, these improvements will encourage new commercial and retail development along the corridor.

## SBIC Satellite Office Update

Small business education and opportunities continue to strengthen in East Tampa. Since 2010, Hillsborough County's Small, Minority Business Development Office and the East Tampa Redevelopment Office have partnered to provide business technical assistance and outreach to East Tampa business owners. A business consultant is available at the East Tampa Redevelopment Office on Tuesdays and Thursdays and is also available to meet at the owner's place of business. Topics include business plan creation, marketing, cash flow, enterprise zone incentives, minority business certification and small business registration and many more!

Lynn Schultz, Business Development Coordinator, at the East Tampa SBIC satellite office, reported the following activities from October 2011 through September 2012:

- 749 points of assistance were provided to business owners.
- 44 businesses were started as a result of business technical assistance provided based on surveys conducted.
- 85 new jobs were created and/or retained as a result of business technical assistance provided based on surveys conducted.

For additional information or to schedule a FREE business consultation, contact (813) 914-4028.

## 2012 East Tampa Progress Report

"We made significant inroads on a number of initiatives during 2012," reports Pastor Essie Sims, Jr., Chair of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and the East Tampa Community Revitalization Partnership (ETCRP). Sims, who became chair in October 2011, has been involved with the CAC and ETCRP since October 2009.

"Public safety, for both our neighborhoods and youth, has been strongly impacted this past year," said Sims. "Roadways received much needed resurfacing and repairs in several neighborhoods; in cooperation with Tampa Police Department, four drug marches were held, increasing awareness and curtailment of East Tampa drug activities."

The focus on youth resulted in many new partnerships and events designed to provide mentoring and safe activities for East Tampa young people. These included:

- **Safe Summer 2012** – A partnership with the City of Tampa's Parks and Recreation Department, plus 38 collaborative partners, the first event attracted over 750 residents of all ages, plus Mayor Bob Buckhorn.
- **Dances, Pizza Parties, Step Shows** – Hosted by the CAC and ETCRP, and in partnership with Tampa Police Chief Jane Castor and the Jackson Heights NFL YET Center, each event attracted nearly 250 children.
- **Fall Festival** – A partnership with Oak Park Community Center, the first event attracted 400 people.
- **Midnight Basketball Program** – This ongoing program held at Jackson Heights Center, from 6:00 pm to 12:00 am, fosters team spirit and healthy play.
- **Mentoring Program** – Programs for boys and girls, ages 12 - 17 were started at Jackson Heights NFL YET Center, with scheduled events such as attending plays at the Straz Center, participating in charity walks, visiting nursing homes, and more.

Other exciting developments included the refurbishments of Ragan and Cascaden Parks through the efforts of the City of Tampa, East Tampa community volunteers, KaBOOM!, and Humana. Phase I of 22nd Street is complete, Phase II underway, and Phase III soon to begin construction. HART announced its new rapid transit bus service, MetroRapid, which will run north/south along Nebraska Avenue. Senior programs were restarted at Jackson Heights and Oak Park Centers with bingo, walking, exercise programs, socials, and boat outings. New partnerships are helping to clean up our streets and neighborhoods, curbing violence, offering financial help, home rehabilitation assistance, and health screenings.

"While we had great success in 2012, challenges still remain and will be a focus for 2013," said Sims. "Economic growth, unemployment, funding, drug activity, illegal dumping, gangs, and continuing to improve our lighting, roads, and sidewalks will keep us busy and motivated to make East Tampa a safe, inviting community."