

local news

Wildwood Makes Way for Tiny Houses And Looks to Clean Up Blight

Tiny house communities officially have their own rules and regulations for development in Wildwood.

By SARAH WILSON
Daily Sun Senior Writer

WILDWOOD

Tiny houses can start calling Wildwood home as long as they stick to the new regulations signed into effect by the Wildwood City Commission on Monday.

Development Services Director Melanie Peavy called the new code a “proactive move,” providing regulations for prospective developers looking to build tiny house communities in the city. She said there are no applications filed to do so yet.

“We’ll be ready for them,” Peavy said.

The code differentiates tiny house communities from mobile home parks by providing guidelines for varying setbacks and communal gathering spaces. The tiny homes also cannot be on wheels.

In other business on Monday, the commission also voted to refine the city’s tree ordinance, laying out a protection and remediation plan for live oak trees. The code states that live oak trees must be replaced if removed, but that the replacement of other trees will be required at the discretion of the development services director.

Peavy said the revised ordinance is less restrictive than before, putting the emphasis solely on value of live oaks instead of a longer list of tree types. It also provides dollar values for the live oaks depending on their size as to how much must be paid in lieu of replacement or relocation of trees.

On the other hand, at the same meeting the commission voted to make its structure

maintenance standards stricter. An ordinance aimed at cleaning up blight was revised to include more specific standards of upkeep for properties in the city. Graffiti on nonresidential properties, the code says, must be promptly cleaned up by the property owner, and structures must be kept up in a structurally sound and sanitary manner.

The new code applies to all structures within the city built both before and after the code was approved Monday.

“We have had issues in the past of structures that have been standing in deteriorating conditions for a very long time and we have no means of enforcing aesthetic improvements due to the fact that they’re safe, they’re not a hazard,” Peavy said. “... The blight ordinance will allow for a little bit more visual improvement.”

The Wildwood City Commission also agreed not to rush its charter review process to try to get possible amendments on the ballot by this November.

Instead, commissioners agreed to take their time and evaluate at a later date whether to hold a special election for charter amendments, or wait until November 2020 to add the measures to the ballot. City Manager Jason McHugh said a special election would cost roughly \$20,000.

McHugh said he was confident that the process could be completed in time for this year’s election, but commissioners urged him not to rush the process.

“If we’re going to do it, we need to do it right,” Commissioner Don Clark said. “We don’t need to rush it.”

Mayor Ed Wolf said he was worried that city staff would channel so much energy into meeting the deadlines for this November that other city business could get neglected.

“This is important but not as important as the city running,” Wolf said.

McHugh said the most pressing items to be reviewed in the city charter are redundancies and out-dated language, as well as its \$2,000 purchase limit. Currently, for any purchases more than \$2,000, the city manager has to get approval from the commission.

Audience Joins MLK on a Trip to ‘The Mountaintop’

“The Mountaintop,” a poignant drama about Martin Luther King Jr.’s last night alive, was a hit.

By KRISTEN FIORE
Daily Sun Staff Writer

“The Mountaintop” gave the audience at The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center a view of Martin Luther King Jr. from a different angle.

Written by Katori Hall, the play takes place on April 3, 1968, at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis — on King’s last night alive.

“Martin Luther King is a hero of mine,” said Art Kelder, of the Village of Charlotte. “I was a teacher and taught mainly kids of color. Martin Luther King was important.”

When asked what she remembers about King, Ali Ritchie, of the Village of Bonita, said his “I Have a Dream” speech.

“And how he was a nonviolent man, how strong he was,” Ritchie said. “How sad I was when he was killed.”

The play, however, is Hall’s vision of how King spent his last night, and he is presented not as a heroic figure, but as a regular man who drinks, smokes, jokes around and even flirts with the motel maid who brings him coffee.

Put on by L.A. Theatre Works, which records radio

dramas, “The Mountaintop” is a hybrid of a stage play and a traditional radio show.

The actors delivered most of their lines standing in front of a simple set and facing the audience. A projector screen behind them played videos and showed photos to go along with what was happening in the story. There were also sound effects, like thunder, rain and a ringing phone.

The story unfolded as King settled down for the night in the motel and ordered coffee from room service, which was delivered by Camae, a spunky and beautiful maid.

The two of them began a witty and flirtatious conversation, but the play was often suspenseful and ironic, given the setting.

“I’ll be doing this until the day I die,” King joked.

King’s character translated to a regular man. He asked Camae if he should shave his mustache, and she teased him for having stinky feet.

But the show wasn’t all about the jokes.

Gilbert Glenn Brown, who played King, and Karen Malina White, who played Camae, may have been the only actors in the play, but the two carried the story very well.

They had audience members on the edge of their seats as they delivered their lines with emotion, sometimes speaking poetically in long bits without flinching or losing their breath.



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Camae had a much more radical stance on civil rights than King did and argued with him, asking what exactly makes black and white people the same.

“We’re scared,” King said. “We’re all scared. Scared of each other, scared of ourselves. Fear makes us human.”

Fear came up again when Camae revealed she was an angel sent by God to take him to the other side.

When King objected, Camae called God on her cellphone and tried unsuccessfully to

bargain for King’s life.

King and Camae passionately discussed the state of the world and Camae showed King the future, which left a lasting impression on the audience.

“It was amazing,” said Susie Barnhart, of the Village of Sanibel. “It was part humor, a little raunchy and yet so poignant. It made you think of the state of the world today.”

When King finally accepted his fate, he asked Camae if dying would hurt.

She answered, “You won’t feel the hurt; the world will.”



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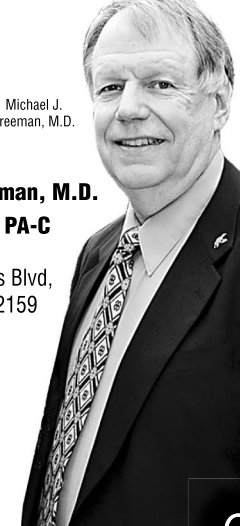

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