

Tarpon River Civic Association Statement on RIGHT OF WAY VACATION SW 6 Street

(DRC Case # V19003)

The Tarpon River Civic Association (TRCA) has become aware that residents Betty and Edward Kirwin have submitted an application for Vacation of Right of Way SW 6 Street, DRC Case # V19003. It will be reviewed at the April 9 DRC Meeting.

After analyzing the street in question and speaking with several neighbors in the area, TRCA Board has voted unanimously (with one Board member recusing from the vote) AGAINST the applicant's request for a street vacation for the following reasons:

- 1 This street vacation would take away public access to Tarpon River waterway at the end of the street. Part of Fort Lauderdale's Master Plan and 2035 VISION is to try to make efforts to INCREASE access to our waterways for boating, fishing and viewing. This street vacation would undermine these city-wide efforts and initiatives. In addition, the City recently released a Parks Master Plan and voters recently approved a \$200M Parks Bond in which one of the goals is to increase public access to green spaces, small parks, and waterways that are within walking distance to as many residents as possible. This application request works in a detrimental fashion to the tenets of the Parks Master Plan and the voters desire for more public access.
- 2 This street vacation would negate the main aspect of the Tarpon River neighborhood's Mobility Master Plan, which aims to improve and add to our neighborhood's walkability, bikability, and increasing the public realm.
- 3 This street vacation would impose a negative effect on our neighborhood's efforts to support and facilitate public life, social interaction and building community. New dwellings have recently been constructed closeby with several young families who enjoy playing in this area. This vacation would take away easy access to water views, fishing, and recreation on the street for all existing and new neighbors.
- 4 While this street vacation applicant may argue that there is past precedent in the neighborhood for street vacations, those previous right of way vacations took place more than 20 years ago and should have no bearing on the current and future policy of the City's and TRCA's efforts to increase the public realm and mobility options within the Tarpon River neighborhood. Furthermore, TRCA is not aware, in recent memory, of any street vacations in which public access to a public waterway have been negated for the private use of one applicant.

Finally, it has come to TRCA's attention that, over two years ago, the owner/applicant and his representatives were observed planting trees and installing lighting in the public access area where the applicant is applying for a street vacation. TRCA believes this was done in an effort to create the false impression that the public access way in question is "private property." Therefore, we are also requesting City Code Compliance and the Parks Department to investigate this matter further.

Tarpon River Civic Association recommends denial of this application. As the elected Board of one of the oldest city-recognized neighborhoods, we see this application as an affront to our mission to protect the greater good for our residents and neighbors.

TRCA hopes to hear back from you on this matter as soon as possible. Should you have specific questions, please address these to Allison Foster, President, TRCA at TRCApresident@gmail.com or 727-251-5982.

Tarpon River Civic Association

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