

Tree Removal Shady

Property located at 2 North Blackwater (directly behind the Winn Dixie) that has been earmarked to become low income housing for 47 units may not be environmentally sound. This particular property, located at the entrance to Stillwright Point, MM 106, has a history. About 10 years ago, the owners tried to lease the property to Onyx as a waste transfer station (garbage dump) for hauling garbage from Islamorada to Miami. Stillwright Point residents fought against this land use on zoning violations and health and safety regulations and won. The Miami Herald ran a story on it.

At least as far back as 2005, the property was investigated (code enforcement) for illegally clearing land. See photos.

When the sewerling of Key Largo began, the owners of the parcel contracted (and sub contracted) with the sewerling companies (Rickman, Niko, Fountain, Redlands, C&W) as a staging area and a place to dump fill. The fill was supposed to be transferred to larger trucks and hauled away. This was dirty fill from trenching asphalt to lay the sewer pipes beneath Key Largo streets.

As more of the 2 North Blackwater property became cleared, neighbors reported seeing backhoes and bulldozers working nights and weekends, spreading the fill on the property.

In 2008, the property was red tagged by code enforcement officer Alan White for zoning violations and illegal fill and clearing of the property. An attorney serving on the KLWTD Sewer Board had previously represented the owners. He intervened on their behalf saying the County cannot red tag the County. The property owners never had a contract with Monroe County. They had a contract with a contractor who also had a contract with the County. The attorney said not allowing fill to be put on the property would hold up the sewer project. Alan White resigned from Monroe County Code Enforcement over this because he could not get anywhere on the obvious violations.

Twice this was supposed to go before the Special Magistrate (aka Code Enforcement Court) around 2009 and it was continually postponed. Code Enforcement required the fill to be hauled out in order for the property to be brought into compliance. The fill was spread at night and on weekends when County Code Enforcement officers were not working.

More protected mangroves and trees were cleared. As all the sewer pipe laying was finished and the trenching ended, the site ceased being used as a place to dump fill.

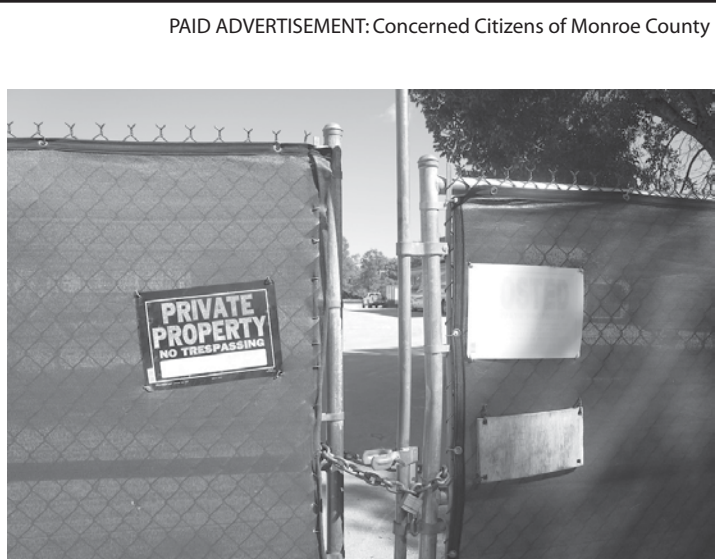
No permits for land clearing were ever issued. No permits for fill were ever issued. On tax records, this property was classified "“environmentally sensitive.” No action was ever taken by the County against the owners for the blatant code violations. No action has ever been taken by the County to force the owners to restore the hammock and wetlands. God only knows what kind of toxic cocktail is in that fill!

The Gorman company is trying to purchase the property listed for \$1.8 million and use HUD funding to develop it into 47 low income units. If Monroe County makes them restore it, there will not be enough acreage to build the enormous housing complex.

Concerned citizens please call to request a public discussion: Townsley Schwab 305-453-8800



Building to the right is the Winn Dixie and behind it is the proposed site for low income housing, previously used to dump toxic trenching fill. Sometime in 2007 the land was illegally cleared. Source: Google Earth and <http://gis.mcpafl.org/monroe/home/ZoomtoParcel?alternatKey=1092916>.



The property at 2 N. Blackwater Lane is locked and hidden.



Behind the fence you can see it has been cleared.

Who would want to live on top of toxic fill? Would you want your family near it? Should these people be allowed to profit from intentionally violating County rules, that are meant to protect us, at the expense of our environment? Who will be held responsible if people become sick from living on top of or near a dump?



PAID ADVERTISEMENT: Concerned Citizens of Monroe County



Aretta Warren is a member of the Art Guild of the Purple Isles. She has been painting for over 30 years, even though she has not had any formal training. She has surrounded herself with great artists and great instructors who have guided her throughout the years.

The Art Box Artist of the Month: Aretta Warren

One such instructor who became a friend was Mildred Semler, a retired art school teacher who gathered a group of artists in Pennsauken, NJ. This group of artists painted one night a week for years, which was a most beneficial experience for Aretta's artistic development.

Aretta's preferred art form is painting and her preferred medium is oils. Though her time with her painting group taught her many things, such as how to paint faster and enjoy the freedom of her art, she feels she has more

learning ahead of her and desires to continue her art training in the years to come.

If you come into The Art Box you will see Aretta's work on display throughout the month of November. Aretta's two most notable pieces are Woman in the Red Dress, and a painting of Johnny Depp.

Aretta has been living in Pennsylvania but spending time in the Florida Keys for years. She is finally in the process of moving to the Keys to become a full-time resident and is looking forward to spending her days painting the local and lush island life.

Take an opportunity to meet Aretta at the Morada Way Art Walk on The Third Thursday of November (the 21st), where she will be available to discuss her work. Or you may contact her at aretta3112@aol.com



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