

PSJRA News

Reid Avenue may look a little bare this week. The old landscaping has been removed. That is good news for the St. Joseph Buffer Preserve and the City of Port St. Joe, who are sharing the removed plants and trees. Before the new trees and groundcover are in place, there is more work to do. This week, new top soil is being laid, and the irrigation is being converted to a more economical drip system. By the end of the week, you will begin to see the new plants and trees: 3 additional Crepe Myrtle, 13 Highrise Live Oak, 16 Allee Elm, 928 Hallmark Bulbine, 111 Lantana, 267 Indian Hawthorne and 204 Asiatic Jasmine. Because so many of you have asked...these tree roots are engineered to NOT disrupt sidewalks and streets! The trees will provide beauty, grace and shade.

By the next week, all will be complete and spruced up in time for the Homecoming Parade! Again, the PSJRA (with the gracious help of the City) will put our purple and gold bows up and down Reid Avenue to support Port St. Joe High School and to add to the festivities.

A few have called to express regret over the change in scenery. Please understand that this decision was a result of a lengthy process that involved the recommendations of landscape architects, urban planners, small-city planners, community consensus and a survey of businesses on Reid Avenue. The community told us to “upgrade streetscape on Reid Avenue” and to “increase pedestrian traffic on Reid Avenue.” Shade trees are an important element of success on Reid Avenue. We know change is never easy...let’s give it some time and see how it works out. We do appreciate the time each of you take in both the planning and in your comments—both positive and otherwise!

Mark your calendars for Rick Segel on October 17. Rick is a marketing expert for humungous companies such as Staples but has his roots in a once-small retail store in a struggling business district in New England. His particular business thrived when many others in the same location did not. He understands it all, and he is bringing it to us! We will be providing fliers this week with all the details, and this is free of charge to redevelopment area businesses!

The topic for the seminar is “How To Drive Customers Through the Front Door...The Secrets of Visual Merchandising.” Did you know it takes 0.33 seconds to recognize a sign? That photos create 300% more recall? That graphics are more powerful than non-graphics? And how does the shopping public respond to handwritten signs? Rick will tell you all this and so much more:

- What are storefronts supposed to do?
- What are the things that would turn you off and prevent you from going into a store?
- What makes a storefront exciting that would make you want to go in?
- What are the visual elements of a storefront?
- What are the most important facts about signage?

Remember, the façade grant program will be made available as soon as the Design Guidelines document is approved by the city. Attend this seminar and find out how to maximize the appeal of your business from the outside in.

If you would like to become more involved in the PSJRA, please attend either of our two monthly meetings: the Advisory Committee meeting on Thursday, October 4 at 5:30 at the Fire Station, and the regular Board of Directors meeting on Thursday, October 11 at 5 PM at City Hall.

