

CPNA's 2010 Annual Meeting 1-19-10, review and outlook

By Ray Breslin, president

2009 brought the opening of the **Riviera South Beach Hotel** on 20th Street at Liberty Ave. The first restored Boutique Hotel to open in Collins Park in many years. The South Beach Group Hotels has been trying to get the City to allow them to operate a small Mexican restaurant around the pool of this totally renovated property for their guest and residents of the neighborhood but have been unsuccessful. Luckily they still have the Catalina Hotel and Beach Resort close by offering food service from both Kung Fu Sushi and Maxine's, now open 24hours.

Walgreens opened in March bringing much needed services to our neighborhood. The Art Windows are curated through the Bass Museum of Art for which Walgreens pays \$30,000 per year for that service. The Collins Park Neighborhood Association gets \$5000 of that for brokering the deal and this year, with the help and guidance of Harvey Burstein, our vice president, we produced a great brochure on our neighborhood including a map, history of our cultural institutions and a listing of the businesses in our neighborhood. It debuted for Sleepless Night and is available at all the hotels in our neighborhood as well as City Hall and the welcome center. We should congratulate ourselves. No other Association has produced collateral material on their neighborhood.

The W Hotel and Residences, the most glamorous project to open in our Neighborhood since the Setai, opened in July. With the opening came the new beach walk extension from 21st to 23rd Streets and a beach access at 23rd Street all generously donated by the W Hotel. The common spaces, restaurant and bar areas are magnificent and the original artwork truly shows, you are in the CANDO Arts Neighborhood. The W spared no expense on the landscaping making it appear as if they have been there for years and not just months. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude for putting us back on track as a cultural destination in Miami Beach. **Mr. Chow also opened** and has been virtually pack almost every night. Who says there is a recession? Apparently not at the W.

The City of Miami Beach did a fabulous job of completing **phase one of the Collins Park renovations**, which includes the parking lot between

Collins Ave and the Beach. It was done professionally and on time. Phase 2 is well underway and will be completed by December of 2010, just in time for Art Basel.

We finally got the **South Beach Local Bus** to come to Collins Park after over 5 years of perseverance. It comes to only the far southwestern corner at 21st Street and Park Avenue but at least we have it and already it is one of the most popular stops on the route. Why it took 5 years, God only knows. We have already asked to have it extend to the Beach so that residents and tourists can get to the beach. 21st Street is the ideal stop because there are rest rooms and a concession building. Lets hope that change doesn't take another 5 years.

CPNA sponsored the CANDO Arts Co-op at Palm Court for Sleepless night. We also sponsored Sonido Batido, a Latin Jazz trio. Our event was from 6 to Midnight and was so successful we were asked to continue through Art Basel and are still there today due to the generosity of Ron Bloomberg and the other owners of Palm Court. Both Miami Beach Arts Trust and CPNA will continue to support this group in our Arts Neighborhood. We only hope other galleries and work spaces will follow. The project **at 2200 Collins Avenue broke ground** just before year end showing that some developers are still moving forward even in a down turned economy.

2010 has already given us great changes in just 3 short weeks with many more to come.

January 1st, 2010 the Little Stage Black Box Theater reopened with a very successful weekend cabaret under the wing of SoBe Arts and has been held over by popular demand proving the need for a small theater space in our neighborhood. This will be available for other groups to also do programming, another plus for the CANDO Neighborhood.

January 3rd, 2010, The Green Market opened on 22nd Street. It will be there every Sunday from 9AM to 6 PM. The Market Company expects to grow the market to about 30 vendors and will include an Art Component later this year.

STK Steakhouse opened “softly” at the **Gansevoort**. The big opening is yet to come.

Parc Place is expected to be finished at the end of January on Collins Avenue between 20th and 21st Street. The retail space was all sold to one buyer who will be leasing it out. No contracts have been signed yet so we don't know what retail is coming to us but we know it is coming. There are also over 50 residential units that the developer has not decided what to do with yet in the current economy.

Artecity has been plagued with banking institution problems that are not their fault but will soon be back on track to finish during 2010.

The Ritz Plaza, on Collins Park's southern most border, has been SLOWLY working on their building project. It is hopeful they will open in 2011.

Development Projects that appear to be on Hold
With no current status, the same as in 2009 are:

The Days Inn

The Greystone Hotel.

The 7 boarded up buildings bounded by 20th Street, Park Avenue, 21st Street and Washington Avenue that does include the burned out Collins Park Hotel stays stagnant for the 8th year. AND

2360 Collins Avenue (AKA the old Creek Hotel/ Banana Bungalow site). Added this year is the **Traymore Hotel**, which has stopped the restoration project due to money woes. The plan if ever completed will have a restaurant on the first floor opening up onto Miami Beach Drive with outside dining truly activating this little known pedestrian walkway.

We hope all of these projects will get back on track since they are defining features of our ever-changing neighborhood but I have no status on any of them as of today even though I have asked.

COLLINS PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION'S 2010 GOALS

Our number one goal that continues year after year is a **garage to be built in our neighborhood**. The City and developer, Ron Bloomberg are very close on negotiating a deal. The deadline is January 31st but then there were 2 other deadlines during 2009 that passes with no resolution and this garage has been on the books for over 8 years.

We will continue our efforts to find **housing for Miami City Ballet students** so that MCB can have a more international school, year round and not just in the summer when they use college dorms to house the younger students. This has been an unsuccessful goal that has carried over for 3 years now.

We will also continue to ask the City to move forward on **the final addition phase to the Bass Museum** as part of the Master Plan for the Collins Park Cultural Campus. This is another ongoing goal that carries over year after year. I believe the City will not address this until after the park restoration is complete. Look for this to become a more active goal in 2011.

Finally, we will **plan an annual event** that will be a signature event for our neighborhood and a salute to the CANDO neighborhood. The event will not actually happen until Spring 2011 when the park is complete but the plans will occur in 2010. We picked late spring not to compete with annual tourist events already in place and to beat the Hurricane Season.

We will be able to approach the VCA for funding for this project since it will bring tourists as well as locals to this annual event.

It will be our version of Art Deco Weekend.