

Commission unveils plans for \$10 million NLV development

By Deborah Kohlen
Sentinel-Voice

The Clark County Commission unveiled plans last Thursday for a \$10 million multi-use "community campus" slated at the intersection of Carey Avenue and Martin Luther King Boulevard. The 8-acre development will include space for North Las Vegas courts, senior housing and more.

The \$10 million is being financed by public and private donations.

The land surrounding the northeast corner of the intersection, valued at \$1.5 million, was donated by the Collins Brothers, a construction and development company that started in Las Vegas 43 years ago. Former state senator and Ambassador to the Bahamas Chic Hecht donated the .35 acre swath on the corner after negotiating with Clark County Commission Chairwoman Yvonne Atkinson Gates.

At Thursday's press conference, Gates and other county officials thanked Hecht and Collins Brothers, then unveiled architectural renderings. Anchored by a 12-foot cast bronze statue of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. — to be erected at the center of a plaza fronting the property — the campus will house a new justice building for the North Las Vegas court which rents its current space.

Phase I construction also includes a senior services center, a family and youth services center and an office building, which are already under construction.

Preliminary plans, drawn up by Kittrell Garlock & Associates, also call for desert landscaping and two "public art walls" adjacent to parking off Martin Luther King Boulevard. There hasn't been any discussion about the dimensions of the walls or what types of art would be on display. County officials said they would likely seek private funding for the art and for the King statue.

Gates said the plaza "will serve as a community gateway and a universal symbol of hope."

"The image of Martin Luther King is one of dignity, of leadership, and of peace," she said. "We hope that this commemorative square will be a constant reminder that the best path to real change is through nonviolence and forgiveness, and that it will inspire our citizens to get involved and help unite our community for a better future."

Gates lauded the collaboration between public and private sectors, saying the meld made the development possible. Also to be financed by partnership are: a community health center slated nearby and a child development center to be built at the intersection of Mojave Road and Harris Avenue.

Brief speeches by Hecht and Collins Brothers spokesman Chuck Dixon backed Gates' praise. Hecht said the development will enhance property values and create jobs. He credited Gates' tenacity for his decision to give up the parcel and called the project "well planned, with foresight to the future."

Dixon said his company was pleased to help with such an important project and glad to be giving back to the community.

Tom Warden, the county's director of public communications, said the development is part of a larger plan to revitalize North Las Vegas and "create a social infrastructure" that will lead to more private and corporate giving and investment in the area.

Formerly racist club gets black owner

Special to Sentinel-Voice

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. — A private beach club that excluded blacks, Jews and Hispanics for decades is being purchased by one of its first black members.

The Bath Club, an oceanfront enclave in Miami Beach, will be sold to developer R. Donahue Peebles, who joined the club in 1996.

"That the proposed sale to an African-American businessman is an ordinary business deal says much about the distance the club has traveled from its regrettable past," said Arthur Teitelbaum, Southern area director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, a Jewish advocacy group. "I suppose the club's founders may be stirring in their heavenly sleep."

The club's 100 voting members decided it could not survive financially without finding a buyer. An "overwhelming" majority voted Saturday to sell the club's 5.3 acres, club president James Hellman said.

The purchase price was not disclosed, but *The Miami Herald* quoted sources as saying it was about \$9 million.

Peebles, who already plans to build the first black-owned hotel in Miami Beach, said he wants to construct a 300- to 400-room resort hotel around the 1927 vintage club.

Off-ramp

(Continued from Page 1)

U.S. 95 won't be able to leave the freeway onto the Martin Luther King off-ramp, but drivers on U.S. 95 from Interstate 15 will be able to.

Magruder said the changes will smooth traffic flow and cut down on fender benders and accidents caused by U.S. 95 westbound motorists trying to merge and use the Martin Luther King exit. At least one business owner is worried about the economic impact of the off-ramp's closure.

"MLK is the gateway to the northwest," said Kelly Bunch, part owner of Chez Place Bar & Grill. "We are against any restrictions that deny access to this community."

But Bunch, and Booker Burney, part owner of Hair Unlimited, say they haven't seen patronage drop yet.

"I realize that the work is necessary," Burney said. "It was very dangerous to exit



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

(Above) Cars pass by the recently closed Martin Luther King Blvd./U.S. 95 on-ramp. (Below) Superior Cleaners owner Archie Johnson said he hasn't felt any effects from this month's closure of U.S. 95. The transportation department closed U.S. 95 for Spaghetti Bowl upgrades.

MLK the way it was."

"If it were to become a permanent closure," Superior Cleaners' Archie Johnson said, "I can foresee future problems. I can't see any problems with it being temporarily closed."

Said Magruder of the Spaghetti Bowl reconstruction: "It will be really an improvement once it opens."



Court strikes down DJ's discrimination case

Special to Sentinel-Voice

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — By a 3-2 margin, the Tennessee Supreme Court ruled Monday that even if managers of a Chattanooga lounge played certain music to drive away black patrons, it's not sufficient grounds for a discrimination lawsuit.

The state's high court decision upheld a lower court's dismissal of a lawsuit brought by Richard D. Phillips, a former disc jockey at the Kicks

Lounge.

The high court cited a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that said a bar's music selection cannot be grounds for discrimination. The Tennessee justices said "an act is not unlawful merely because the actor is appalling, ignorant, or grossly insensitive."

"Moreover," Justice Janice M. Holder wrote for the majority, "we are hesitant to fashion a rule meant only to address false stereotypes that

all individuals' tastes in music fall neatly within specified cultural or racial boundaries."

Phillips, who is white, wanted a jury trial against the lounge for what he claimed was the humiliation and suffering he endured by having to enforce discriminatory practices.

Phillips said he resigned in 1992 after he was forced to play 1950s rock 'n' roll and country music whenever lounge manager Bobby

Johnson tossed him a wadded napkin with a scrawled note that read "too black."

Phillips also said Kicks managers routinely asked black patrons, but not whites, for identification and made them pay cover charges.

He also said managers enforced a dress code only against blacks, refused to seat black patrons, and changed the draft beer to Killian's, because Budweiser was popular among blacks.

Law Firm of Smith & Williams

ATTORNEY AT LAW



TIMOTHY C. WILLIAMS

Timothy Williams is a member of the Nevada & Illinois State Bar, practicing primarily in personal injury cases.

COMBINED 27 YEARS OF LEGAL EXPERIENCE

EMPHASIS ON PERSONAL INJURY CASES

- Automobile Accidents
- Motorcycle Accidents
- Slips & Falls
- Wrongful Death
- Dog Bites
- Pedestrian & Other Bodily Injuries
- Medical Malpractice

892-0000

1785 E. Sahara Ave. Ste. 337
Las Vegas, Nevada

Neither the State Bar of Nevada nor any agency of the State Bar has certified any lawyer identified here as a specialist or expert. Anyone considering a lawyer should independently investigate the lawyer's credentials and ability.