



**The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County
P.O. Box 13693 St. Petersburg, Florida 33733**

November 20, 2008

City Council
PO Box 2842
St. Petersburg, Florida 33731

Dear City Council Members:

The entire CONA General Membership voted unanimously last night at their Nov CONA meeting to:

- **ask City Council members to halt the annexation of a portion of Tierra Verde Island**

CONA members cannot believe that our City Council would even continue this process:

- when CONA membership continues to ask you to stop
- when 98% of Tierra Verde residents are asking you to stop
- when the Pinellas County Commission members are asking you to stop
- when the Pinellas Planning Council is asking you to stop.

Each of you have all committed to listening to the people. Two of you spoke eloquently at the Nov 14th City Council meeting about wanting to hear what the people wanted before you made a decision on another issue at that meeting. The people have spoken loudly and clearly. CONA hopes that you are listening.

Over 200 people were at Monday night's Council meeting for the second reading of this. I believe 59 people spoke against. Over 120+ residents signed cards indicating they were in attendance, chose not to speak, but were very much against this annexation.

This is the City's third attempt to annex this. To go forward against everyone's wishes and then allow the courts to decide the right and wrong does harm to everyone and most definitely to the reputations of each Council member.

CONA repeats its concerns:

- CONA neighborhoods are concerned about providing increased services (police, fire, emergency and others) in this challenging economy.
- Cutbacks to existing services are already occurring – one Fire Dept substation is slated to close.
- Adding city services to an island accessible only by a bridge without putting a substation there defies logic.
- This is contrary to City's stated intention to work with Pinellas County and other municipalities and within the guidelines being formulated for non-contiguous annexation.
- Tierra Verde Island is not a contiguous parcel of land to the City of St. Petersburg, but an island separated by almost a mile of water.
- CONA neighborhoods are concerned that their taxes will increase to cover the costs to provide City services to this annexed area they do not want.

We understand that the City is trying to find new revenue sources during these challenging times. However, this is not the right way to go about that and the overwhelming populace is telling you just that. Each of you has a responsibility to your neighborhoods and voters. Please listen to what we all are saying. We ask you to do the right thing and vote NO. Thank you for your time and careful consideration.

Barbara Heck
CONA President