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June 03, 2008

Voters approve redevelopment questions

ST. PETE BEACH — Tuesday's referendum election failed to settle the long and hotly debated battle over how this beach community will be redeveloped.

Even though voters approved all of the controversial redevelopment referendum questions, legal issues remain that cloud the election results.

A new lawsuit filed Monday promises to further delay any resolution to maximum building heights, density, zoning and the myriad other development issues that have virtually paralyzed long term planning here.

Intense interest in the debate over development regulations was clearly evidenced in the relatively high turnout — more than 45 percent of the city's voters cast a ballot.

All six referendum questions passed easily. The first two non-controversial questions passed by 82 percent or more. The four petition-initiated ballot questions garnered solid 55 percent or better support.

"It is what it is. We definitely needed a new comprehensive plan," said Mayor Mike Finnerty, adding that it was "bothersome" the ordinances were written by a citizen's group rather than the commission.

Four ballot questions were proposed by Save Our Little Village (SOLV), a citizens' organization that successfully petitioned for the referendum election. They asked voters to either approve or reject ordinances amending: the city comprehensive plan creating a community redevelopment district; the large resort section of the city's land development code; the city's general standards for redevelopment; and the city's Town Center core development regulations.

Posted by Times Editor at 9:19:44 PM on June 3, 2008 in [Politics](#) | [Permalink](#)

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