



Mission: To make the Village of Spring Hill a neighborhood center by improving the pedestrian, aesthetic and commercial amenities of the area

FALL 2010

A Pocket Park for The Village

It is with great excitement that the Board of Directors of the Village of Spring Hill announces the latest project to enhance our neighborhood—a “pocket park” to be located next to Regions Bank, in the very heart of our Village. This mini-park, designed in keeping with the rich history of Spring Hill, will be an inviting oasis where people can stop to relax, eat a snack or meet friends. It will also be an attractive complement to the recently improved Village streetscapes that have already been implemented. The beautiful rendering above prepared by Dover, Kohl & Partners helps visualize the park at maturity.

Just what is a “pocket park”? It is a small, outdoor park usually developed on an otherwise forgotten space in a “pocket” surrounded by other buildings. Growing in popularity in areas embracing Smart Growth, pocket parks can bring shade, quiet, and enhanced property values to urban areas. Once transformed, this small currently unused parcel will undoubtedly become one of those “special places” that our planners helped us envision during the creation of *The Blueprint for Spring Hill*.

We hope you can help us fulfill the vision for this new pocket park. We have already

received generous donations and in-kind contributions, including a grant from The J.L. Bedsole Foundation in the amount of \$20,000, use of the land by Regions Bank, and park design by Terry Plauché of Plauché Johnson Landscape Architects.

With a final push from the community, we are *targeting park construction to begin around the first of the year*. Please consider a tax-deductible contribution to this project which will enhance our neighborhood for years to come. Donations of \$1,000 or more will be acknowledged on a park plaque. A limited number of named donation opportunities for features such as trees with iron grates, street lights, and benches are also available. Any of these would make a perfect gift in honor of or in memory of a friend or family member. *Of course contributions in any amount will be greatly appreciated.*

Park Features in Memory/Honor:

Tree & Grate	\$1,500
Street Light	\$3,500
Bench	\$3,500

If you have any questions or would like to discuss donation opportunities, please contact us at linda@thevillageofspringhill.com. As we have said since the early days of the organization, “Together We Can!”

This newsletter is made possible by generous contributions from:



**FAMILY
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Leading the Way with Smart Growth

Residents of the Village of Spring Hill should feel great pride in the community-led planning efforts of 2007/2008 resulting in *The Blueprint for Spring Hill* and its zoning ordinance. *The Mobile Press-Register* has recently run a series of articles on Smart Growth and has repeatedly given the Village credit for starting the City's path toward this form of planning. When Andres Duany, founder of the Congress for New Urbanism, recently spoke at the Downtown Mobile Alliance's annual meeting, he specifically mentioned the Village as an example of the kind of balance that communities are striving to achieve by adopting Smart Growth.

With all of the accolades surrounding the Village's Smart Growth approach, it's worth revisiting what the concept really means and how the *Blueprint* reinforces its core principles. Smart Growth has been used across the country to ensure that city, town, and village centers achieve a balance of walkability,

compactness, mixtures of uses (residential and commercial), and automobile access. It strives to recast these centers as real 'places' that a resident, store owner, or visitor can identify with and feel a part of. The passage of the *Blueprint* and optional zoning by the Planning Commission and City Council finally will allow this kind of growth to take place in Spring Hill.

Recent progress made throughout the Village provides examples of Smart Growth principles being implemented. Even three years ago it was unusual to see people walking along the heavily trafficked Old Shell Road; today it's the exact opposite. Improvements to the sidewalks, the streetscapes and the major intersection at Old Shell and McGregor, as well as the introduction of public spaces such as the clock plaza and the planned pocket park, encourage a spirit of community and illustrate the commitment to a safe, aesthetically pleasing village center. That's the

promise that Smart Growth holds for Spring Hill—as well as for the City of Mobile. We should all feel proud to be leading the way!



Visit the Village's web site to download a copy of *The Blueprint for Spring Hill*.

www.thevillageofspringhill.com

The Village Tree



New Drake Elm trees planted last fall have already made a huge impact on the streetscapes around the Old Shell Road and McGregor Avenue area.

For more information about obtaining the signature Elm trees contact the Urban Forestry Department at 208-7091, and feel free to contact the Village for help in placing the trees. Specific distances should be observed for a long-term effect as well as allowing for the possibility of future lighting sources as laid out in the *Blueprint*.

Continuing the Vision

The Village of Spring Hill, Inc. remains active throughout the community, often working behind the scenes months or years before changes actually occur. The Village works as a liaison between property owners and developers with the City of Mobile to provide information about the guidelines outlined in the *Blueprint*. It helps neighborhoods and property owners implement streetscape improvements, answers questions, and shares information about community events and other matters.

The Village of Spring Hill, Inc. has no paid staff and is entirely dependent on the efforts of its volunteers as well as many other supporters. Without their dedication of time, talents and creativity, together with the financial support of the Spring Hill community, the organization would not be able to achieve the positive changes you see happening. *Thank you for your support!*

Around the Roundabout

You might have read some recent press about a roundabout being planned in the Village of Spring Hill. When Dover, Kohl & Partners helped draft a master plan for Spring Hill, the area around Museum Drive and McGregor Avenue was one of the critical study areas. Based on traffic profiles and the importance of this location as surrounding properties began to redevelop, our planners saw an opportunity for a high quality roundabout.

The roundabout turned out to be a perfect fit, offering excellent traffic handling capabilities and creating an aesthetically pleasing form of intersection. A roundabout has the added benefit of not requiring any electricity for signals and works equally well during a power outage—like after a hurricane.

Based on the preliminary planning in *The Blueprint for Spring Hill*, the Village commissioned a feasibility study and preliminary engineering from McCrory and Williams, and the results confirmed its suitability in this location. The Village of Spring Hill continues to work with City Council Members **Gina Gregory** and **Reggie Copeland**, newly elected County Commissioner **Connie Hudson**, and State Representative **Jamie Ison** to complete construction drawings so that the project will be “shovel-ready” once funding is secured. It will certainly be a wonderful addition to the Village and a grand entrance to the City’s cultural and athletic facilities around Langan Municipal Park.



Artistic rendering by Dover, Kohl & Partners for illustrative purposes.

Sidewalk Update

Before the completion of the sidewalks on the South side of Old Shell Road it was rare to see anyone attempting to navigate this area on foot. Now with the sidewalks complete there is rarely a time in the day when a walker, runner, bicyclist, or business patron cannot be seen traversing this area. Because the sidewalks have been so well received and utilized by the community, The Village of Spring Hill, Inc. is working on two new sidewalk initiatives for our community. We have engineered sidewalks for the North side of Old Shell Road from Lavretta Park to Oakland Avenue as well as along McGregor Avenue in front of Spring Hill Manor. We continue to work with City, County and State officials to identify potential funding sources for these projects. Once completed, two of the primary objectives of our master plan, to increase the connectivity of all the neighborhoods with the commercial areas and the public parks and to promote a traditional village-like atmosphere, will be that much closer to being attained. *Stay tuned!*



TOGETHER, WE CAN...

Join your friends and neighbors and be a part of something exciting happening in Spring Hill!

- Friend: \$35 – 99
- Contributor: \$100 – 249
- Supporter: \$250 – 499
- Sustainer: \$500 – 999
- Patron: \$1,000 +

The Village of Spring Hill, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization.



Give online with PayPal or credit card at

www.thevillageofspringhill.com



Mail form to:

The Village of Spring Hill
4354-A Old Shell Rd. #145
Mobile, AL 36608-2011



Take the Time...

to renew your membership or join The Village of Spring Hill today! Memberships are on a calendar year basis, and now is the time to renew/join for 2011. Your contributions and support are key to our success so that new initiatives can be undertaken. Keep the momentum going and be a part of the exciting transformation of our community.

2011 membership in the amount of: \$ _____

Pocket Park contribution in the amount of: \$ _____

In Memory/Honor of _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone(s): _____

Kudos To...

- **Place LeVert** for planting Drake Elms at their entrance.
- **Eaton Square** for trimming bushes, planting flowers repainting their entrance wall.
- **Springwood** for adding four new brick columns and landscaping their entrances.
- **Country Club Estates** for their distinguished new street signage.
- **Lavretta Park** for the parking area fence funded from Council Member **Gina Gregory's** capital budget.
- **Dave Synder**, local photographer, for his outstanding photographs of Village scenes that have been used in many publications.
- **Donovan Ballard**, local landscaper, who has been maintaining the Clock planter at Old Shell and McGregor.
- **All of the business and property owners** that are making aesthetic improvements in the Village.

For more information on these and other improvements see our website – www.thevillageofspringhill.com.



IN MEMORIAM

Members of the Board of the Village of Spring Hill, Inc. are saddened at the recent loss of one of our members **Helen Baumhauer DuMars**. Helen was a founding member of the Board who gave freely of her time, organizational skills and vision to revitalizing her childhood neighborhood of Spring Hill in order to preserve the same spirit of community she enjoyed as a young girl. The merchants of Spring Hill, with whom she worked closely, and the Board will greatly miss Helen's warmth, quick smile and eagerness to be involved. Her spirit will continue to be with us all.



4354-A Old Shell Rd. #145
Mobile, Alabama 36608

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