

Page 5

1 Hearing none, Jill, if you'll call the  
 2 roll, please.  
 3 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?  
 4 MR. BELLIN: Yes.  
 5 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?  
 6 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.  
 7 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?  
 8 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.  
 9 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?  
 10 MR. PEREZ: Yes.  
 11 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?  
 12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.  
 13 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?  
 14 MR. BEHAR: Yes.  
 15 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?  
 16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.  
 17 Okay. I don't know of any changes to the  
 18 agenda. Seeing none, we'll stick with the  
 19 agenda in the order that we have it.  
 20 Items 5 and 6 -- they're all public hearing  
 21 items. 5 and 6 are related. And I know our  
 22 City Attorney, Mr. Leen, wanted to, I think,  
 23 talk about the process or procedure.  
 24 MR. LEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
 25 This matter came before the Planning and

Page 6

1 Zoning Board at the last meeting, and the  
 2 Planning and Zoning Board voted to continue it.  
 3 It ended up going up to the Commission on First  
 4 Reading, and the Commission adopted the  
 5 provisions on First Reading, and then they  
 6 remanded it to back to the Planning and Zoning  
 7 Board, to basically get your guidance before  
 8 they take it up on Second Reading.  
 9 So I just wanted to note that the  
 10 Commission did want to hear the matter on First  
 11 Reading. So that's why they went forward and  
 12 did it. It was placed on the agenda by  
 13 Commissioner Keon, and they proceeded, but they  
 14 were very respectful of the fact that you  
 15 wanted another chance to address this and  
 16 really give your guidance, so that's why they  
 17 remanded the matter.  
 18 I just wanted to -- you have a Resolution  
 19 in your packet, Attachment C, to the Zoning  
 20 Code Text Amendment Residential Infill  
 21 Regulations Staff Report, and if you look at  
 22 that, the instructions from the Commission are  
 23 listed in there, A through H. The important  
 24 ones for you are that the City Manager should  
 25 appear before the Planning and Zoning Board.

Page 7

1 It's actually been amended. This is an  
 2 unsigned version of the Resolution. I'm to  
 3 read to you from the signed version. "To  
 4 present the guidance of the City Commission, as  
 5 well as her own views on implementation of that  
 6 guidance," and I can see that the City Manager  
 7 is here.  
 8 Welcome Madam City Manager. I know that  
 9 she's going to provide you the views of the  
 10 Commission from the meeting, as well as her own  
 11 views on that guidance.  
 12 In addition, the proposed Ordinances shall  
 13 be brought to the City Commission as soon as  
 14 possible, for Second Reading, after the  
 15 Planning and Zoning Board meeting.  
 16 Any reference to Workforce Housing shall be  
 17 removed from the proposed Ordinances and the  
 18 item. That was a concern of the Planning and  
 19 Zoning Board. I remember that you wanted to  
 20 see the report from Staff about Workforce  
 21 Housing. The Commission understood that, so  
 22 they asked that Workforce Housing not be part  
 23 of this Ordinance. That will be addressed  
 24 separately.  
 25 In addition, the Ordinance shall include a

Page 8

1 minimum square footage per unit of no less than  
 2 650 square feet. The Ordinance should provide  
 3 that consideration be giving to including  
 4 plants and/or foliage on buildings. And City  
 5 Staff and the Planning and Zoning Board should  
 6 consider whether the Ordinance should allow for  
 7 a base density of at least a hundred units per  
 8 acre.  
 9 In addition, I was asked by Commissioner  
 10 Vince Lago to let you know that as Attachment E  
 11 is a memorandum that he wrote to the City  
 12 Commission, that states his views on the topic,  
 13 following the meeting.  
 14 That's all I wanted to say at this time. I  
 15 see that the City Manager is here, and I know  
 16 that she wanted to present to you, at the  
 17 instruction of the Commission, her views on  
 18 this.  
 19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
 20 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you, Mr. City  
 21 Attorney.  
 22 Madam City Manager, welcome.  
 23 MS. SWANSON-RIVENBARK: Thank you --  
 24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you for being  
 25 here.

1 MS. SWANSON-RIVENBARK: -- Mr. Chair and  
 2 Members of the Board. We genuinely respect all  
 3 of the good work that you do. I have to give a  
 4 special shout-out to my appointee, because I  
 5 know she reads everything and works really hard  
 6 on it, and I'm grateful. At all points, she  
 7 knows that her job is to do whatever she  
 8 believes is in the best interest of the City,  
 9 and I am proud of her role on this Board, in  
 10 addition to all of yours.

11 I do bring you greetings and guidance from  
 12 the City Commission. At the February 14th  
 13 Commission Meeting, the Commission was confused  
 14 as to why Workforce Housing was a focus of the  
 15 discussion at the Planning and Zoning Board  
 16 meeting. It's the Commission's intention to  
 17 review and consider the North Ponce  
 18 Re-Development Plans, a review that has spanned  
 19 decades of discussion, separate and apart from  
 20 City-wide initiatives that are in the  
 21 preliminary stage of drafting, such as  
 22 Workforce Housing, open space and possible  
 23 future incentives.

24 As you know, I should say, I reviewed your  
 25 meeting on tape, and we do have it now, again,

1 on video. I'm not sure why it ever stopped,  
 2 but you're back on video, and we're going to  
 3 capture all of the old ones and put them in  
 4 place, but I was able to watch your meeting,  
 5 after the fact. I watched the Commission  
 6 meeting, again, twice, so that I had a really  
 7 good understanding of your discussions, your  
 8 good discussions, as well as what the  
 9 Commission's real intentions were.

10 And I will tell you, Mr. City Attorney,  
 11 they laughed when Vice Mayor Quesada talked  
 12 about foliage on the buildings, so I wouldn't  
 13 necessarily frame that as a strong direction  
 14 from the Commission.

15 MR. LEEN: Fair enough. Fair enough.

16 MS. SWANSON-RIVENBARK: As you know, we are  
 17 in the early stages of proposing a Workforce  
 18 Housing program City-wide, not unique or direct  
 19 to one particular area. So it's too early to  
 20 know what that will entail, where it will be,  
 21 how we will apply it, and what the concepts  
 22 really will be City-wide. We have not  
 23 presented it to you. I have not seen it  
 24 myself. We haven't had our public  
 25 conversations, nor have we spoke to the

1 Commission in great detail.

2 The general concept, we like. The concept,  
 3 as it applies to Coral Gables' economy, not  
 4 Miami-Dade, but how that is actually applied,  
 5 way too early for us to begin discussing.

6 I noticed, though, in your minutes, your  
 7 Staff Reports and other discussions, that our  
 8 Staff is enthused by the concept and that they  
 9 may have talked a lot about it, but from the  
 10 Commission's perspective, it's premature, until  
 11 we can really see what the drafts entail, where  
 12 it will be applied, how it will be measured,  
 13 who will enforce it. It's a good concept, but  
 14 we're not ready to move forward with it.

15 There are some other projects that the  
 16 Commission is also really interested in, that  
 17 we're just not ready to move forward with yet,  
 18 but it means that in time we will.

19 At some point, we're going to come to you  
 20 with a draft proposal on open space. We'll be  
 21 revising what open space requirements are, what  
 22 counts, what should not count, how much should  
 23 be required, and how the presence of open space  
 24 within projects, as well as neighborhoods,  
 25 should be encouraged and protected. We're also

1 studying the Transfer of Development Rights for  
 2 open space, not just Historic.

3 We had a great Workshop with the City  
 4 Commission in February, and they provided  
 5 important policy direction, and we are putting  
 6 those concepts to paper, but they are not ready  
 7 to be incorporated into the plans, nor the  
 8 recommendations.

9 At some point in the future, we hope to  
 10 bring you a Community Benefit Program, to  
 11 ensure better transitions between Commercial  
 12 and Residential areas, while also encouraging  
 13 neighborhood improvements, like LED street  
 14 lighting and neighborhood amenities, but that's  
 15 not ready to be brought back to you, either.  
 16 It also hasn't gone out for community review,  
 17 so it's premature for us to require, mandate or  
 18 encourage them, separate and apart from a PAD  
 19 or a Site Plan process.

20 Here's what we do know. Your Board will be  
 21 instrumental in shaping and framing these  
 22 Ordinances in the future, but we're just not  
 23 ready to bring them forward to you at this  
 24 point. The recommendations, nor the plans, are  
 25 ready.

1 What we are ready to do, though, is  
 2 finalize the North Ponce studies, a two-year  
 3 process that has involved Charrettes, community  
 4 meetings and hearings. The Commission is  
 5 asking for your input on several matters, such  
 6 as minimum unit size. Not a minimum standard  
 7 for Miami-Dade County, but what is the right  
 8 unit size for Coral Gables, and what should a  
 9 one bedroom be, a two-bedroom, a studio be,  
 10 what types of amenities should be in place,  
 11 both on site and near site of these  
 12 developments; what amount of FAR is the right  
 13 amount for an infill area, is it a 2 FAR, is it  
 14 with an extra .5 for architectural incentives,  
 15 is it higher, but what are those circumstances  
 16 that it should be and what benefits must be in  
 17 place for the City before it is considered; how  
 18 many units per acre are desired and needed,  
 19 desired for the community scale and needed to  
 20 be viable. Is it 60 units per acre, is it 75  
 21 with architectural incentives, is it a hundred,  
 22 is it another number. Is 97 feet the right  
 23 building height in that area or should it be a  
 24 hundred for more floor to ceiling.  
 25 I've been asked to present to you a sense

1 of the Commission and also a sense of my  
 2 thoughts. As you consider the recommendations  
 3 for the Infill District, free of Workforce  
 4 Housing considerations, you need the time to  
 5 consider what is the best recommendation for  
 6 that re-development area, and you should know  
 7 that you have that time. You do not need to  
 8 finalize your views, your recommendations  
 9 tonight, but when you are ready and your review  
 10 is finalized, the Commission looks forward to  
 11 hearing your recommendations. They valuable  
 12 your input, and so do I.  
 13 Those are general comments the Commission  
 14 wanted me to present to you. I will say,  
 15 you're hearing this from a First Reading  
 16 action, you're hearing it in the middle, and  
 17 there's no Second Reading date that has been  
 18 set. There's another item that you're hearing  
 19 tonight, and there was a First Reading. This  
 20 is the action related to the Overlay District  
 21 in the Downtown. The rush for this is because  
 22 we are progressing with streetscape, and so we  
 23 want to have those signs, those -- it's not a  
 24 physical re-development, it's more a signage  
 25 and operations guide.

1 We are interested in having those developed  
 2 as soon as possible. We worked with the  
 3 Business Improvement District. They're here  
 4 tonight regarding the item. And so that has a  
 5 sense of urgency. The other does not.  
 6 So any questions I can provide regarding  
 7 the Infill and the Commission's intentions or  
 8 related to the Overlay District in the  
 9 Downtown, I'm happy to answer them.  
 10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.  
 11 Anybody have any questions based on what we  
 12 just heard or do we want to get started with  
 13 the Staff presentation?  
 14 MR. BEHAR: Started.  
 15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: All right. Mr. Trias,  
 16 it's all you.  
 17 MR. TRIAS: Thank you, very much. May I  
 18 have the PowerPoint, please?  
 19 Just very briefly, because both, the City  
 20 Attorney and the City Manager, did a great job  
 21 summarizing the ideas, for the benefit of the  
 22 public, I will just go through the PowerPoint.  
 23 As the City Manager very clearly explained,  
 24 this process has been going on for decades in  
 25 the City, and at least for the past two years,

1 as far as our involvement and your involvement  
 2 in these regulations.  
 3 As you know, this North Ponce area has  
 4 multiple issues, multiple Ordinances that you  
 5 have addressed and reviewed and so on, and this  
 6 is the last one. This is the last one of this  
 7 comprehensive view of the North Ponce area.  
 8 And it applies to every area within the  
 9 boundaries that is not -- that is not a part of  
 10 the Overlay in Ponce de Leon. The Ponce de  
 11 Leon Overlay is shown in the blue or white line  
 12 in those two pictures. The rest of it, the  
 13 rest of the area, is part of this review today.  
 14 There are two requests, a Comprehensive  
 15 Plan Amendment, and also a Zoning Text  
 16 Amendment. That has not changed. That's the  
 17 same review you had before. The summary of the  
 18 request was explained very, very clearly by the  
 19 City Manager. There's an Overlay for the whole  
 20 North Ponce area. That Overlay would allow or  
 21 would propose up to a hundred units per acre,  
 22 if the parcel is 20,000 square feet. So this  
 23 only applies for parcels that are 20,000 square  
 24 feet or larger. We're talking about up to 100  
 25 units per acre, up to a 2.5 FAR, and that would

1 be with the Mediterranean Architectural Bonus  
2 provisions.

3 So that really is it, in terms of the  
4 content of the request, and what's being asked  
5 of you is to evaluate that proposal and see  
6 whether or not it makes sense at a hundred or  
7 not, and at 2.5 or not, or if you have some  
8 other alternative ideas.

9 The text of the proposal includes some  
10 other things, such as landscape, et cetera.  
11 That is consistent with the other Ordinances  
12 that you have reviewed for the North Ponce, but  
13 the only content that is significant is the  
14 density and the FAR. Again, that's addressed,  
15 both, in the Comp Plan, and in the Zoning Text  
16 Amendment, and it's included for your review in  
17 full detail in the Staff Report.

18 And Staff has reviewed both, the  
19 Comprehensive Plan changes and the Zoning  
20 changes for compliance with the Comprehensive  
21 Plan, and we find that they do comply with the  
22 appropriate goals and policies of the  
23 Comprehensive Plan, and Staff has determined  
24 that the application is consistent with the  
25 Comprehensive Plan and recommend approval.

1 If you have any questions, I'll be able to  
2 answer. We also have some members of the  
3 BID -- I'm sorry, some members of the public  
4 that may be interested in speaking on this  
5 issue.

6 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you, Ramon.

7 All right. This is a public hearing item,  
8 so we'll open up the public hearing. Jill, do  
9 we have any speakers signed up?

10 THE SECRETARY: Yes. We have four.  
11 Mario Garcia-Serra.

12 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Good evening, Mr. Chair,  
13 Members of the Board, Mario Garcia-Serra, with  
14 Offices at 600 Brickell Avenue, representing  
15 both, the Alliance Startlight Companies, as  
16 well as FIPRO Holdings, both companies have  
17 multiple properties within the North Ponce  
18 area.

19 We've been involved in the whole North  
20 Ponce study since the very beginning, over two  
21 years ago, and have been active participants,  
22 generally supportive of all of the initiatives  
23 that have been undertaken by the City, reviewed  
24 by this Board, and ultimately approved by the  
25 City Commission or are still in the process of

1 review.

2 I think, in this sort of process, it's good  
3 sometimes to take a step back and sort of see,  
4 okay, overall, what are we trying to achieve,  
5 and I think what we're trying to achieve is  
6 pretty clear. The North Ponce area has not met  
7 its full potential, so we're looking for the  
8 sort of re-development that everyone can agree  
9 would be welcomed along certain corridors and  
10 along certain parcels which have been vacant or  
11 underutilized for considerably a long time and  
12 simply have not been incentivized sufficiently  
13 so as to be re-developed and are sort of  
14 declining as time passes. That's been sort of  
15 the overall goal.

16 It's been approached in three different  
17 segments; the Ponce corridor, which you've  
18 already reviewed, it's gone up to the City  
19 Commission, I believe approved on First  
20 Reading, but not yet on Second Reading; the  
21 Preservation District, which has already been  
22 finally approved, and then this Residential  
23 Infill District. We're just trying to target  
24 those properties that I mentioned before, over  
25 20,000 square feet in size, that are either

1 vacant today or dramatically underutilized, as  
2 far as what their density is and what's  
3 permitted right now.

4 The biggest incentive, I think, that's been  
5 discussed, or the two biggest incentives, have  
6 been density and FAR, an increase in those, and  
7 I think really where the discussion has now  
8 boiled down to is, what's the appropriate  
9 density, and we've been sort of hearing  
10 everything from a floor of 75 units an acre to  
11 potentially a hundred units to the acre.

12 The reason we, as you may have seen in the  
13 minutes, were proposing or advocating for the  
14 hundred units to the acre is the idea of how  
15 that affects average unit size. The higher  
16 density count, generally the smaller the unit  
17 size will be, and smaller, not meaning going  
18 too small, because, of course, there's a  
19 concern with units just being too small and not  
20 being sufficient or not being really suitable,  
21 but the idea is also tied into what sort of --  
22 what market do you want to address in the North  
23 Ponce, and the idea is, I think, to try to  
24 address the next generation of Coral Gables  
25 families, young professionals, you know,

1 couples starting out with the family.  
 2 And so the idea has been to try to get a  
 3 target, I think, of somewhere around a 900 to  
 4 1,000 square foot unit, and I could take out  
 5 sort of the chart that we had, indicating, on a  
 6 20,000 square foot site, you know, how much  
 7 floor area you get, and when you have a 75 unit  
 8 per acre requirement, versus a hundred unit per  
 9 acre requirement, then you'll see that on the  
 10 hundred unit per acre requirement, is when you  
 11 start getting to the point of a 900 to a  
 12 thousand square foot unit, which is, I think,  
 13 the target sort of unit that we're looking for  
 14 to address the particular needs of the City and  
 15 the idea of re-developing this part of Coral  
 16 Gables.  
 17 We, of course, are advocates of moving  
 18 forward, in general, with the planning process,  
 19 and, you know, we do have something of an  
 20 emphasis on wanting to be able to move forward  
 21 as soon as possible. The market is the market,  
 22 and we need to try to, you know, move forward  
 23 with trying to get approvals for these new sort  
 24 of developments as soon as possible. And most  
 25 importantly, this has been a two-year process.

1 this come back to us with a strong hand, to get  
 2 a little law and order in front of this Board.  
 3 And as far as I'm aware, this Board operates at  
 4 all times with law and order and respect. And  
 5 so I just want to put that on the record, that  
 6 we try very hard to treat everybody fairly.  
 7 The process is the process. Some people  
 8 may not like it, but it takes a long time  
 9 before it ever gets to this Board. And we do  
 10 hear this a lot, that when it comes to us, we  
 11 hear complaints that they've been at it for so  
 12 long, and we need to push it along. But I hope  
 13 the public and the applicants understand that  
 14 when it comes to this Board, it's the first  
 15 time that we are seeing it. We get our packets  
 16 on the Friday before the meeting, and so it's  
 17 sometimes quite understandable that we need  
 18 time to digest it and to review it and fully  
 19 understand it, and the understanding and  
 20 appreciation of the public for that part of our  
 21 process will be appreciated going forward.  
 22 Robert.  
 23 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Chairman, I could not agree  
 24 with you more. Well said.  
 25 If we start with -- and I want to give you

1 Two other components of it have already been  
 2 reviewed and approved by the City Commission.  
 3 We think it's only fair for the process to  
 4 finish with this final segment being able to be  
 5 reviewed by the City Commission, which  
 6 initiated the process to begging with.  
 7 Those are all of my comments. We're  
 8 available, of course, to provide more  
 9 information, if you'd like, similar to what we  
 10 presented to the City Commission.  
 11 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.  
 12 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Thank you.  
 13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.  
 14 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: That's it, Jill?  
 15 THE SECRETARY: The other speakers are for  
 16 the other item.  
 17 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. So we'll close  
 18 the public hearing on this item, and open it up  
 19 for discussion amongst the Board.  
 20 MR. BEHAR: Anybody wants to start?  
 21 MS. MENENDEZ: No.  
 22 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Well, before you get  
 23 into the details, just so our record is clear,  
 24 in reading the minutes that we got from the  
 25 Commission Meeting, somebody suggested that

1 my thought on this item, before we do much  
 2 more. I think I am pretty -- I have a lot of  
 3 experience doing multi-family buildings very  
 4 similar to what we're going to be considering  
 5 today. And I've done my math back and forth,  
 6 to the point where it's a very simple process,  
 7 and something that we need to keep in mind in  
 8 the Gables is that our FAR also takes into  
 9 account common areas, such as corridors. If  
 10 you do a multi-purpose room, if you do a  
 11 fitness center or gym, all of that is taken  
 12 into consideration when you calculate the FAR.  
 13 If we try to do -- which the goal, the  
 14 intent, is, I think, and I agree, is to do  
 15 units in the range of 650 to, let's say, a  
 16 thousand square feet, that's an average of  
 17 about 850 to 900 square feet per unit.  
 18 When you add a common area factor, which in  
 19 my case, and we may have disagreement with  
 20 other design professionals, what we normally  
 21 put into the projects, to be in a competitive  
 22 market, is between 20 to 22 percent common area  
 23 factor.  
 24 So if I take a unit that averages between  
 25 650 and a thousand, let's say it's about 850 to

1 900, and I add 20, 22 percent, my average unit  
 2 sizes come up to 1,100 square feet.  
 3 If I do that, and I want to say, okay, how  
 4 could I get my density, and I take a 20,000  
 5 square foot lot, and I multiply that not times  
 6 2.5, but, let's say, 2.75, gives me an FAR,  
 7 maximum FAR, for that property of 55,000. When  
 8 I divide 55,000 divided by 1,100 per unit, I  
 9 get 50 units on half an acre. So when I  
 10 multiply times the acre, that equates to about  
 11 a hundred units per acre. Those are the unit  
 12 sizes that, again, give us a net rentable of  
 13 650 for the small one, maybe for a one bedroom,  
 14 and a thousand for the two bedrooms.  
 15 So we've got to look at it, when we  
 16 calculate -- when we, you know, figure out the  
 17 FAR and the density, based on the actual we're  
 18 going to be doing, not just taking the FAR that  
 19 you're allowed to do and divide it by an  
 20 average of 650, because that will give you a  
 21 much higher density.  
 22 I think you have to take into consideration  
 23 the common area that goes into these projects  
 24 in order to be able to do the proper  
 25 calculation, in my opinion. That's the only

1 way that you could, you know, do it correctly.  
 2 To me, and we could go back and forth,  
 3 since, you know, last time, I'm a believer that  
 4 a hundred units per acre is a right number to  
 5 be assigned for the properties, which, in a  
 6 smaller lot, in a half an acre lot, 20,000,  
 7 you're only going to get a 50-unit building,  
 8 but that's going to give you the sizes. The  
 9 FAR, I think that the 2.5 is okay. I think the  
 10 2.75 will work much better.  
 11 Just to go back and touch on something that  
 12 our City Manager mentioned, the height, those  
 13 three -- going from 97 to a hundred is a huge  
 14 difference, because you don't -- in order to go  
 15 from like an eight-foot ceiling, you know, to  
 16 like an eight-foot-eight, that is what you  
 17 need, because if not, in the bathrooms, in the  
 18 closet, you have very low ceilings. Those  
 19 eight inches mean a lot.  
 20 And in order to get a ten-story building,  
 21 which you will do, in 97 feet, you're really  
 22 compromising the finished floor height on a  
 23 unit. Those additional three feet makes an  
 24 incredible difference.  
 25 So I will support, you know, for us to

1 consider the a hundred feet versus 97.  
 2 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman, I neglected to  
 3 say that the 100 feet is also included in the  
 4 Ordinance, in the proposal.  
 5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.  
 6 MR. BEHAR: Don't worry. I did that for  
 7 you.  
 8 But, you know, that's my opinion, you know,  
 9 and I base this -- so you know, I mean, I have  
 10 done, over the last fifteen years, luckily, a  
 11 lot of the units, a lot, I mean, probably in  
 12 excess -- not in Coral Gables, throughout,  
 13 probably in excess of 15, 18,000 units. And  
 14 when you do the equation, we do it for purposes  
 15 of fees and all, what I could get, how many  
 16 units could I get on a project, and the math  
 17 works out almost perfect when you do those  
 18 numbers. That's my opinion.  
 19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I just want to make sure  
 20 I'm understanding this correctly. Is the  
 21 matter that's been voted on by the City  
 22 Commission, are they -- and I'm not sure I'm  
 23 looking at the right thing, that's why I want  
 24 to make sure that my colleague set me straight  
 25 here, if I'm going awry, the way I read this,

1 and I'm not looking at one that's signed, but  
 2 it seems that they -- what they are looking at  
 3 and they voted, at least on First Reading, is a  
 4 maximum of 60 units per acre or 75 units per  
 5 acre with architectural incentives. Am I  
 6 looking at the right thing?  
 7 MR. LEEN: No.  
 8 MR. BEHAR: No.  
 9 MR. LEEN: Are you looking at the  
 10 Resolution, Attachment C?  
 11 MS. MENENDEZ: No.  
 12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I'm looking at Attachment  
 13 A.  
 14 MS. MENENDEZ: You're looking --  
 15 MR. LEEN: You're looking at what they  
 16 approved.  
 17 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Attachment A.  
 18 MR. LEEN: On First Reading? The First  
 19 Reading Ordinance.  
 20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Is that Attachment A?  
 21 MR. LEEN: Yes.  
 22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So that is what  
 23 they --  
 24 MR. LEEN: But they had some comments, as  
 25 well. Because, remember, they approved it on

1 First Reading, and they have Staff go back and  
2 look at it, and there were a number of  
3 inquiries to Staff, which the City Manager  
4 mentioned, and also is mentioned in the  
5 Resolution that's Attachment C.

6 So they're not -- they have not made a  
7 final determination at all as to any of those  
8 matters.

9 Mr. Trias, do you have anything further?

10 MR. TRIAS: No. You're correct. And the  
11 facts are that on Page 3 --

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I'm following.  
13 Thank you.

14 MR. TRIAS: Page 3 summarizes the issue.

15 MR. LEEN: Yes. So what they wanted was  
16 your guidance, so that you could provide that,  
17 and then on Second Reading they could make  
18 amendments to some of those things. And, in  
19 particular, they emphasized in the  
20 Resolution -- I'm having a signed copy brought  
21 for each of you of the Resolution so that you  
22 can have it. Cristina Suarez is going to get  
23 it for me.

24 But, in particular, they identified -- they  
25 looked at square footage per unit. They didn't

1 want it to be any less than 650 square feet.  
2 They wanted Workforce Housing removed. But  
3 they asked you specifically whether the  
4 Ordinance should allow for a base density of at  
5 least a hundred units per acre. So they asked  
6 you a specific question. They wanted to know  
7 what you thought was the appropriate units per  
8 acre.

9 MR. TRIAS: And Mr. Chairman, if I could  
10 help, also. Staff included a chart that  
11 analyzes the numbers in ways that are very  
12 consistent with what Mr. Behar said.

13 We basically took a 25 percent common area  
14 number, which is close or probably very  
15 optimistic, in terms of the size, and I have to  
16 say that our data is exactly what -- consistent  
17 with the opinions of Mr. Behar, in terms of  
18 sizes, and in terms of the overall dimensions  
19 of units. And we can go over it, if you want  
20 to, but we have a couple of examples, that are  
21 built examples. We have a couple of  
22 theoretical examples, at 20,000 square feet,  
23 and the numbers, I believe, work very well.

24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Maria.

25 MS. MENENDEZ: No. I just have a few quick

1 questions for my peace of mind.

2 Originally, when we first looked at this  
3 Infill area, we were looking at just one  
4 section.

5 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

6 MS. MENENDEZ: And then, either one meeting  
7 ago or two meetings ago, the entire North Ponce  
8 area came into effect. I'm having a hard time  
9 understanding why that happened.

10 MR. TRIAS: That happened as a result of  
11 the very good input we got from the Board and  
12 from different people involved in the process.  
13 And it is my recommendation that this should  
14 apply to the whole area. And I say that,  
15 because we're talking about 20,000 square feet  
16 parcels or larger, and that's a limited number  
17 of parcels.

18 If you look at the realistic application of  
19 this Infill, there's only a handful of places  
20 where this would apply, and it became very  
21 clear to me, from the point of view of the  
22 professional Staff, that this was a good  
23 transition between the Conservation District  
24 ideas and the Mixed-Use ideas at the core, at  
25 the center of the North Ponce. It was a good

1 way to transition between the two.

2 So that's our recommendation. Clearly, you  
3 can provide whatever opinion or recommendation  
4 you believe.

5 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay.

6 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Marshall.

7 MR. BELLIN: Yeah. I think the  
8 recommendations that the Commission came up  
9 with make a lot of sense. The a hundred units  
10 an acre is something that I think will work  
11 well with the unit size.

12 I don't agree with the 650 minimum size. I  
13 think that's too big. If you want to provide  
14 studios or efficiencies, 650 is too large. The  
15 Code now allows for a minimum of 575, and I  
16 think we ought to keep that.

17 MS. MENENDEZ: For a studio or for a one  
18 bedroom?

19 MR. BELLIN: The minimum size of 575. And,  
20 generally speaking, it would be for a studio.

21 MS. MENENDEZ: Yeah, it has to be for a  
22 studio, because one bedroom is tough.

23 MR. BELLIN: No, a one bedroom --

24 MS. MENENDEZ: I have a one bedroom, 700  
25 square feet, and that's tough.

1 MR. BELLIN: Yeah. A one bedroom should be  
2 around 750 to 800, and two bedrooms maybe a  
3 thousand, but that's up to the developer, how  
4 to work that out. But I would like to see the  
5 575 kept as is.

6 MR. TRIAS: Okay. Again, that was -- the  
7 Commission's recommendation was 650. The  
8 numbers we looked at is that 600 or so is a  
9 reasonable number for efficiencies.

10 MR. BEHAR: To me -- and I would agree,  
11 some of the units that we did at the Gables  
12 Ponce, and I'll walk you through, some of the  
13 units are very small. They're about that size,  
14 maybe just a little bit tight.

15 MS. MENENDEZ: What size?

16 MR. BEHAR: 580. 580 Square feet --

17 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay.

18 MR. BEHAR: -- you know, and they work.  
19 And we only did 20 units like that. Those 20  
20 units went very quickly, out of 300 something  
21 units. So there is a need for that.

22 At the end of the day, it really doesn't  
23 matter if we -- you know, if you have 575, you  
24 have a density cap, so it's not like you could  
25 say, "Okay, if I do units that are going to be

1 an average of 800 or 850, and I want to reduce  
2 them to the 575, I'm going to get more units."  
3 The density is going to cap you, no matter  
4 what.

5 So, you know, that's not -- I will agree  
6 that it will be good to keep some units just a  
7 tad smaller. If a developer wants to provide,  
8 you know, a more reasonable priced unit, maybe  
9 he will do 10 percent of the units or, you  
10 know, 20 percent of the units. That way he  
11 could afford to put it at a lower number.

12 So I don't have a problem putting, you  
13 know, like a studio or something at 575, like  
14 Marshall, you know, suggested, that is today in  
15 the Code, and then going from there. I think  
16 that's going to -- that's going to allow for  
17 more affordable priced units, not affordable  
18 units, but more affordable priced units.

19 MR. BELLIN: So I think what we need to do  
20 now is, since we've gotten guidance with  
21 respect to density, and you know my opinion on  
22 unit size, what is the proper FAR.

23 MR. TRIAS: The recommendation is 2.5, with  
24 Med Bonus, at this point, and that gives you  
25 800 or so square feet for the average, if you

1 take 25 percent off for common areas, at a  
2 hundred units.

3 MR. BEHAR: You're going to be -- you're  
4 going to be probably less -- if you do that,  
5 less than a hundred units per acre. You're  
6 going to probably drop to closer to like 90  
7 units per acre, if you do the 2.5, you know.  
8 And we could do that. We can select to -- you  
9 know, opt to do the 2.5. My recommendation is,  
10 you know, the 2.75. Not the normal, like you  
11 allow in other areas, that you're allowed to go  
12 with Med Bonus up to 3.5. 2.75 gives you  
13 enough to provide wider corridors, you know,  
14 common area spaces, multi-purpose rooms,  
15 fitness center, that, in today's market, is  
16 needed in order to be competitive.

17 The days of having small corridors and no  
18 amenities are no longer there. If you want to  
19 compete and you want to be able to get a  
20 market, you know, you have to do that. And  
21 that's based on my experience on a daily basis.

22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: That's based on your belief  
23 that a hundred units per acre is the right  
24 number.

25 MR. BEHAR: Yes. Yes, Frank.

1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: And I'm just throwing this  
2 out to you and also to Ramon, I was reading the  
3 memo circulated by Commissioner Lago, and he  
4 expresses a concern, on the part of the  
5 residents, of congestion and density. And he,  
6 in his memo at least, recommends no more than  
7 75 to 85 units with all incentives considered.  
8 And I'm wondering -- I want to hear from Robert  
9 on this, too, but, first, Ramon, is that  
10 something that was considered by the Staff?  
11 You know, I understand you had meetings with  
12 residents, and did they share with you the  
13 concerns that they apparently shared with  
14 Commissioner Lago about the density and not  
15 wanting any more than 75 to 85 units per acre?

16 MR. TRIAS: Yes. And I think that the  
17 concern is the impact, in terms of traffic.  
18 That's the way that I hear that discussion.  
19 People sometimes are concerned that more units  
20 mean a lot of more automobile traffic, and that  
21 is true.

22 But what I would like to propose here is  
23 that, because of the existing conditions and  
24 because of the fact that this is going to be  
25 really applicable in only a few locations,



1 because the minimum size is 20,000 square  
 2 feet --  
 3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry, Ramon, I have a  
 4 question about that. Excuse me for  
 5 interrupting.  
 6 MR. TRIAS: Yeah, go ahead.  
 7 MR. RODRIGUEZ: It could be naivety on my  
 8 part, but can't you acquire like lots and put  
 9 them together and get 20 --  
 10 MR. TRIAS: Yes.  
 11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: So what you may have today  
 12 may not be the same circumstance you have  
 13 tomorrow, if somebody gets industrious and  
 14 ambitious and starts acquiring lots.  
 15 MR. TRIAS: That is true, and what happens  
 16 is that -- I would say that because you have  
 17 changed already the Conservation District, and  
 18 that encourages the preservation of buildings  
 19 that are there and the addition of buildings --  
 20 additions to those buildings, they have become  
 21 much more valuable, in terms of buildings that  
 22 can be restored and can become very, very  
 23 attractive.  
 24 And I say this, because the densities that  
 25 are existing right now with two-story buildings

1 are very high, because they don't have parking,  
 2 and because they tend to be very small units.  
 3 So the number of units that you have in  
 4 existing buildings, sometimes you cannot even  
 5 match with the proposed regulation. So they  
 6 have value.  
 7 So what happens is that I believe -- I  
 8 believe that there's going to be some  
 9 assemblage, certainly, but I don't believe that  
 10 the neighborhood is going to disappear all of a  
 11 sudden and we're going to have only 20,000  
 12 square foot parcels. That is not a likely  
 13 scenario, because of the different incentives  
 14 that we have created.  
 15 So I think that the impact -- just to make  
 16 it simple, I think that the impact is going to  
 17 be limited. I don't think the impact can be  
 18 measured precisely, because of exactly what  
 19 you're saying, but I don't think it's going to  
 20 be a wholesale impact, in terms of the whole  
 21 area. I think it's going to be limited and  
 22 it's going to be very beneficial to the area,  
 23 because it brings residents, and that, in  
 24 itself, creates a much higher quality of life.  
 25 MR. BEHAR: You know, Frank, I think the --

1 again, I'm a strong believer that a hundred  
 2 units is the right number, for the reason that  
 3 I explained earlier. And I will agree with  
 4 Ramon. This is not going to be a free-for-all  
 5 throughout the whole area.  
 6 It goes further, when you start looking at  
 7 the requirements, if you're abutting a property  
 8 that is not of 20,000 square feet, then you may  
 9 not even reach this density, because the  
 10 setback requirements are greater and all. So  
 11 this will only happen in certain pockets,  
 12 certain areas, that you could do -- you know,  
 13 that is conducive to that, not just anywhere.  
 14 MS. MENENDEZ: Have we identified those  
 15 areas? Ramon, have we done a study?  
 16 MR. TRIAS: Well, let me give you an  
 17 example from today. Today I met with a person  
 18 that controls these two parcels right here on  
 19 Eighth Street. Both of them are less than  
 20 20,000 square feet. And I had a discussion  
 21 with him about, "Well, maybe you can assemble  
 22 some land," and they had tried, but that had  
 23 not worked. So, for example, it's very  
 24 unlikely that these changes take place.  
 25 Now, when you look at this aerial, and the

1 white line is the Mixed-Use District along  
 2 Ponce de Leon, you don't see too many green  
 3 open parcels, and those are the ones that I  
 4 would say -- to answer your question, have I  
 5 identified some, yes. I mean, there's one  
 6 right here. There's another one maybe right  
 7 here. But this one, for example, I believe  
 8 it's an ownership on both sides of this line,  
 9 so even that requires some thinking, in terms  
 10 of what is the best approach to development,  
 11 and the rest of it, if you look at this -- for  
 12 example, this vacant parcel right here, that's  
 13 in the Mixed-Use District, so that's not one of  
 14 the likely parcels. So that is the best  
 15 explanation that I can give you, in terms of  
 16 likelihood.  
 17 Likelihood means that there are two or  
 18 three parcels that are already assembled.  
 19 Anything else would have to be assembled. And  
 20 from my conversations with individuals, it is  
 21 difficult to assemble.  
 22 So the impact is -- unless you have a  
 23 different experience.  
 24 MR. BEHAR: No. No. You're absolutely  
 25 correct. I could attest that it's very, very

1 difficult to assemble parcels, you know,  
2 greater than 20,000. It's very difficult,  
3 unfortunately. I mean, I don't want to say  
4 impossible, because nothing is impossible, but  
5 it's very difficult to do that.

6 MR. PEREZ: For the sole purpose, it just  
7 becomes cost prohibited for the purpose of  
8 making sense of your land basis. So I would  
9 agree that the chances of an assembling in that  
10 area being greater than 20,000 square feet  
11 would be very difficult.

12 MR. WU: But I have to ask you to speak  
13 into the mike.

14 MR. PEREZ: Sure.

15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: And then I also think,  
16 and, of course, one of the architects or Ramon  
17 can tell me I'm wrong, but, of course, the  
18 number of units will dictate the traffic  
19 impact, but I also think the number of bedrooms  
20 surely contributes to that. And if you reduce  
21 the density, but you don't reduce the FAR,  
22 you're going to end up, I think, with just  
23 larger units and more bedrooms, which, really,  
24 doesn't offset any traffic impact, as opposed  
25 to higher density, but smaller units.

1 MR. BEHAR: You know, I'm curious, we sit  
2 in the middle of a big urban area, Coral Gables  
3 does, and I will say, like, I don't know, 80  
4 percent of the traffic that comes through the  
5 Gables is from the outside, that passes through  
6 Coral Gables.

7 It has been proven that if you have more  
8 residential units within the City, the traffic  
9 decreases, the local traffic decreases. We  
10 cannot avoid having people pass through our  
11 streets. Unfortunately, you know, it's every  
12 day, you know, in the morning and afternoon,  
13 but if you generate -- you start providing more  
14 residential units within the corridor, this  
15 area, we're going to be better off, you know,  
16 because it has been proven the trolley -- and I  
17 wish I had those statistics -- how much the  
18 users have increased.

19 You know, I'm telling you, my daughter --  
20 the perfect example, she lives above my office.  
21 I don't get to see her very often, but she  
22 lives right above us at the Gables Ponce.  
23 Probably, four days a week, she takes the  
24 trolley. She works on 2525 Ponce. She takes  
25 the trolley to work.

1 You know, it's a different mentality, the  
2 young folks, that want to participate, and  
3 that's what we need to, I think, gear to.

4 MR. TRIAS: I don't think we should  
5 underestimate traffic. Traffic is a serious  
6 issue, a very important issue. We certainly  
7 think about it. But, in this case, we're  
8 dealing with an urban infill situation, where  
9 people are much more important than cars, and  
10 certainly the opportunity to have that  
11 transition between the very large buildings  
12 that are allowed on Ponce de Leon and the  
13 historic fabric of the Conservation District,  
14 that transition is what we're talking about,  
15 and I think -- I think it's a limited impact, a  
16 limited transition, but very valuable, from an  
17 aesthetic point of view, and also from the  
18 point of view of having more people in the  
19 neighborhood.

20 MR. GRABIEL: I agree. We've been looking  
21 at this area now for months, I think, or years,  
22 and we've always identified it as the place  
23 where we can make housing that can fit our  
24 extended families, our children, you know, in  
25 some cases, even our grandchildren, you know,

1 who are looking for smaller units, that would  
2 like to live in Coral Gables, and it's a  
3 perfect location to do the smaller unit, the  
4 higher density.

5 You have the buses on Eighth Street, the  
6 buses on Douglas. You have the trolley going  
7 down Ponce de Leon. If we want people to live  
8 in Coral Gables and work in Coral Gables, this  
9 is the place where we can provide the kind of  
10 housing that would allow that to happen.

11 MS. MENENDEZ: Julio, how small is small  
12 for you?

13 MR. GRABIEL: I would like to go below 600.

14 MS. MENENDEZ: Really?

15 MR. GRABIEL: You know, I agree. I agree  
16 that we should be below 600. I don't know if  
17 575 is the one. 25 square feet --

18 MS. MENENDEZ: For studios?

19 MR. GRABIEL: Yes, for a studio, because  
20 there are couples and singles who can live in a  
21 studio, and would like to live in Coral Gables,  
22 you know, because they work in Coral Gables,  
23 from Douglas Entrance all of the way to  
24 Downtown Coral Gables, and they can't afford  
25 the one bedroom -- a two bedroom or the one

1 bedroom apartment, but a studio fits in an  
2 economic model that is very attractive to some  
3 people.

4 So, you know, I don't know where 650 came  
5 from, if there was an analytical study done for  
6 the 650 or it was just --

7 MR. TRIAS: My opinion is that there was an  
8 interest in having some higher quality units in  
9 the City of Coral Gables, and that was one way  
10 to achieve that. Now, that may not be the best  
11 way. If you have a different suggestion,  
12 certainly we can forward that to the  
13 Commission.

14 MR. LEEN: May I add something?

15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Sure.

16 MR. LEEN: You know, the Resolution  
17 indicated that the Ordinance should include a  
18 minimum square footage per unit of no less than  
19 650 square feet.

20 So when this goes back to the Commission,  
21 it will have this in there, no less of 650  
22 square feet; however, you should vote on -- if  
23 you don't agree with that, you have the right  
24 to recommend anything you think --

25 MS. MENENDEZ: Is that for a studio, Craig?

1 MR. LEEN: That was the minimum square  
2 footage per unit.

3 MS. MENENDEZ: Regardless?

4 MR. LEEN: Yeah. Now, my own thought was,  
5 there was a concern that this was turning into  
6 a Workforce Housing Ordinance, and so they  
7 wanted to make it clear that it wasn't, and  
8 that if there's going to be smaller units for  
9 Workforce Housing, that would be handled  
10 separately, in a different Ordinance.

11 I think that that's part of the reason why  
12 this came in, but, I mean, ultimately, you have  
13 the transcript or you could look at the  
14 transcript and decide. What their Resolution  
15 says is no less than 650 square feet. You are  
16 free to recommend something different, but it  
17 will go in the Ordinance as 650 square feet, at  
18 least as the minimum.

19 MR. TRIAS: 650 is a very large efficiency.  
20 I mean, that will be a large efficiency.

21 MR. BEHAR: That's a very comfortable one  
22 bedroom.

23 MR. TRIAS: Yeah. Yes.

24 MS. MENENDEZ: It's a nice one bedroom,  
25 yeah.

1 MR. TRIAS: Absolutely.

2 MR. BELLIN: I thought I was recommending  
3 something other than 650. What I was  
4 recommending was 575.

5 MR. LEEN: What did you say? You're  
6 saying, from the Commission or from this Board?

7 MR. PEREZ: From the Board.

8 MR. BELLIN: No, it's my recommendation  
9 from this Board --

10 MR. LEEN: Oh, no, no. I definitely heard  
11 that recommendation, and what I would say is  
12 that -- I think it would be useful if you did a  
13 straw pole or you do a vote to let the  
14 Commission know what you think the minimum  
15 should be. All I was saying was that Staff,  
16 when they present it on Second Reading,  
17 according to the Resolution and the  
18 instructions of the Commission, it can't be  
19 less than 650 square feet.

20 The Commission can then consider your  
21 recommendation and they could lower it on  
22 Second Reading.

23 MR. TRIAS: So, Mr. Chairman, I've heard  
24 two issues so far. One is the 575 square feet.  
25 The other one is 2.75 FAR. So if at some point

1 you would like to take a straw vote or even put  
2 in --

3 MR. BEHAR: You know, the 575 -- maybe  
4 what, and I will, when the time of  
5 recommendation, I will recommend that maybe a  
6 certain percentage of the units, you know, is  
7 575, the rest have to be 650 or above.

8 And, for example, I would say, maybe 25  
9 percent of the units cannot be less -- you  
10 know, could be only 575. The rest have to be  
11 650 or higher. So you provide a little bit of  
12 both within the project.

13 MR. PEREZ: So I'm in agreement, as well,  
14 of keeping the flexibility of a smaller unit.  
15 At the end of the day, in my opinion, I think  
16 it's going to boil down to the builder and the  
17 developer and what type of unit he wants to  
18 deliver and what type of niche he seems or  
19 feels there's a demand for.

20 I wouldn't want to see a requirement to  
21 keep a certain percentage of smaller units. At  
22 the end of the day, I feel that you should  
23 give, you know, autonomy or the right to that  
24 builder, that developer, to deliver that  
25 minimum size as he sees fit. At the end of the

1 day, if he wants to deliver bigger units, I  
 2 think he has the right to do that, as well.  
 3 So I would want to keep the smaller units  
 4 at where they are right now, but I wouldn't  
 5 want to put any requirement as to how much  
 6 they're forced to deliver.  
 7 MR. BEHAR: The only reason, Albert, I  
 8 suggested that is, coming from the Resolution  
 9 from the Commission, that, you know, they voted  
 10 on 650. I would want to, you know, have the  
 11 ability to at least lower it, and as a  
 12 compromise, you know, because, let's say, we  
 13 don't want to allow smaller units, then we're  
 14 going to keep, you know, 650. At least maybe  
 15 there's a possibility, as an option for them,  
 16 to say, okay, we'll allow some units to be  
 17 smaller, you know.  
 18 From the beginning, I thought 575 could  
 19 work.  
 20 MR. PEREZ: So just to make sure I  
 21 understand, what you're saying is, if, in fact,  
 22 we allow or we propose to reduce that to 575 or  
 23 580, what you're saying is, if, in fact, a  
 24 developer wants to go that small, to put a cap  
 25 on those number of units?

1 MR. BEHAR: And the reason -- yes, because  
 2 the Commission is -- the Resolution says, 650,  
 3 and they may not want to give a hundred  
 4 percent, you know, freedom to do all small  
 5 units, so, you know, maybe a percentage of  
 6 them.  
 7 And, look, and you're right, the market  
 8 would dictate. From my experience, typically  
 9 you -- typically you do 45 percent one  
 10 bedrooms, 45 percent two bedrooms, and 10  
 11 percent three bedrooms. Those are typically  
 12 the numbers, how they work out. The two  
 13 bedrooms always is a split plan, okay. So you  
 14 have, bedroom and bathroom, bedroom and  
 15 bathroom, because that way you could have two  
 16 roommates.  
 17 The one bedroom -- again, 650 is the one  
 18 bedroom. A smaller unit, yeah, you could do  
 19 the 575. You could even do less. But let's  
 20 say, 575, since it's currently in the Code.  
 21 The two-bedroom will range between 850 to  
 22 1,050. It depends whether it's a corner unit  
 23 or it's, you know, an interior unit, but those  
 24 are the numbers that the market would dictate.  
 25 And all of this is driven by the price

1 point the developer or the builder is going to  
 2 rent them at. And, at the end, that's what we  
 3 need, to keep those numbers to be within an  
 4 ability for, you know, the young people or  
 5 whoever -- because not only young people, you  
 6 know, anybody could afford to do it.  
 7 MR. WU: Mr. Chair, as a thought, maybe if  
 8 the 650 pertains to one bedroom, and the 575 to  
 9 efficiencies, would that make more sense to you  
 10 all?  
 11 MR. BELLIN: Well, I don't think you're  
 12 going to do a one bedroom at 575.  
 13 MR. WU: That's why I'm saying, if we just  
 14 quantify it -- qualify it, that 650 pertains to  
 15 a one bedroom minimum.  
 16 MR. BELLIN: I think it's just going to  
 17 evolve all on its own.  
 18 MR. WU: So you would like the 575 --  
 19 MR. BELLIN: Because 575 is the minimum,  
 20 and generally speaking, that's going to be an  
 21 efficiency or a studio. It's not going to be a  
 22 one bedroom.  
 23 MR. WU: Okay.  
 24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Ramon.  
 25 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman, you could choose

1 to be silent on that issue, and then regulate  
 2 with the density and the FAR and the existing  
 3 minimum size, and just simply be silent. I  
 4 think I agree with the comment that the market  
 5 should be able to dictate some of this. I  
 6 think that's a good strategy. And I think that  
 7 the only issue that I think we need to discuss  
 8 a little bit further is that if you truly  
 9 believe that 2.5 is not sufficient to build the  
 10 100 units, then the additional FAR could be  
 11 warranted.  
 12 In our analysis, it appeared to work at a  
 13 hundred, but --  
 14 MR. BEHAR: You know, I'm saying it,  
 15 because I've done my calculations, and that's  
 16 what it really would take, the 2.75, to do it.  
 17 You get -- actually, what it does, it will give  
 18 you the flexibility to have the minimum size  
 19 units, you know, comfortably.  
 20 MR. TRIAS: I mean, certainly the units  
 21 will be larger, and I'm a hundred percent  
 22 sure --  
 23 MR. BEHAR: And more important, something,  
 24 again -- the City uses the FAR, which, you  
 25 know, takes into consideration the corridors.

1 You know, I have not done a five-foot wide  
 2 corridor in the last ten years. Typically we  
 3 do a six-foot wide corridor, because that's  
 4 what -- it looks better. Why? Because when we  
 5 do the interior design, you know, the doors are  
 6 set back in. You're allowed to do  
 7 articulations in the hallway, not just a flat  
 8 hallway, so you start, you know, doing  
 9 something of nicer quality. So that's a  
 10 six-foot hallway, what it requires, minimum.

11 So that is taken into consideration in the  
 12 FAR. You know, if we were doing a really low,  
 13 low end residential units building, then you  
 14 could do the five-foot hallways and you do what  
 15 I do for the Pinnacles and the Conifer, which  
 16 those are really affordable housing projects,  
 17 not what we want to do here.

18 MS. MENENDEZ: I mean, but there's no  
 19 regulation saying you have to have a six-foot  
 20 corridor.

21 MR. BEHAR: The market will dictate that,  
 22 Maria. The market will dictate the quality of  
 23 the product you do. Walk with me Gables  
 24 Residential, the Gables Ponce Project. You  
 25 know, look at the amenities. Why are they

1 getting one of the largest, if not the largest,  
 2 rent in the whole Miami-Dade County? Because  
 3 of the quality of the product that they're  
 4 delivering.

5 You know, the multi-purpose, you got a  
 6 multi-purpose who is probably, I don't know,  
 7 3,000 square feet. You've got another room,  
 8 that's called the Club Room, that's probably  
 9 another 1,800. The fitness center, you should  
 10 drive by that ground floor fitness center. It  
 11 is really -- you know, it's a lot of units, 300  
 12 units in total, but it's like a 4,000 square  
 13 foot, you know, fitness center, because that's  
 14 what today is required, those amenities, in  
 15 order to be competitive.

16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Frank.

17 MR. RODRIGUEZ: If you wanted to stay with  
 18 a -- I'm talking to Robert now, since, you  
 19 know, you've been speaking on these issues. If  
 20 you wanted to stay with the 2.5 FAR, I think --  
 21 did I hear you say that 90 units would be the  
 22 appropriate?

23 MR. BEHAR: No. To do it at the ratio --  
 24 at the square footage that I'm talking about,  
 25 you're going to get a hundred units, but that

1 means the unit will be -- the average of the  
 2 units will be smaller. Instead of being an  
 3 average of, let's say, 900, your average will  
 4 be 825, okay. The 650 and two-bedroom will  
 5 drop, you know, enough, to get you those  
 6 numbers. You're still going to achieve the  
 7 hundred units, but the average, you know, will  
 8 be smaller. The common areas may not be as  
 9 much. And, I mean, I don't know if any of  
 10 the --

11 MR. TRIAS: Our analysis was 820. So it's  
 12 exactly what you're saying, in terms of the  
 13 average.

14 MS. MENENDEZ: Your analysis said, what?

15 MR. TRIAS: The analysis of the unit that  
 16 Robert said was 825, ours was 820, so we agree  
 17 completely. And that's included in your  
 18 package. That's this chart.

19 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Anybody have any  
 20 other comments? Questions?

21 MR. BELLIN: I have some comments. It's  
 22 mostly some -- maybe some housecleaning  
 23 comments. Mediterranean architecture, in order  
 24 to take advantage of what's being offered, the  
 25 hundred units an acre and the 2.75, if that's

1 the number, Mediterranean architecture is  
 2 mandatory.

3 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

4 MR. BELLIN: It just seems like it all  
 5 ought to be tied together. You know, it's  
 6 mandatory, so you've got to provide it, so  
 7 you're getting incentives to provide it.

8 MR. TRIAS: Well, you get the additional  
 9 density. You can do less density, if you  
 10 choose not to do the Mediterranean.

11 MR. BELLIN: Well, then you go back to 50  
 12 units an acre.

13 MR. TRIAS: No, 75. 75 units per acre.

14 MR. BELLIN: Okay. 75 units an acre.

15 MR. BEHAR: But without Med Bonuses, for  
 16 lack of a word, 75; with Med is a hundred, the  
 17 density.

18 MR. TRIAS: Right. Exactly.

19 MR. BELLIN: Yeah, but there's a whole  
 20 other things that come with that. You get the  
 21 density. You get the FAR. You get a whole  
 22 range of things. And you've got to provide a  
 23 bunch of things, according to the table.

24 MR. TRIAS: But you get the additional  
 25 density and the additional FAR. So it's a

1 bonus program.  
 2 MR. BEHAR: What are the specific  
 3 requirements that is part of the Resolution?  
 4 MR. BELLIN: So much from Table 1 and so  
 5 much from Table 2.  
 6 MR. BEHAR: But I think that's something  
 7 then we have to really -- I think, today, in my  
 8 opinion, we vote on the density, the FAR, or we  
 9 recommend, and then those housecleaning, which  
 10 is a good way to put it, we've got to go back  
 11 and see what it will entail to do that.  
 12 MR. TRIAS: Yeah. Tonight we are not  
 13 changing -- Staff is not proposing to change  
 14 the Mediterranean Bonus Ordinance. That's  
 15 something that, it exists, it's applied. What  
 16 we're saying is, you can do 75 units or a  
 17 hundred. A hundred would require compliance  
 18 with the typical regulations of the Med Bonus  
 19 Program.  
 20 MR. PEREZ: What's the FAR with  
 21 non-Mediterranean Bonuses?  
 22 MR. TRIAS: Let me read it again. 2.0.  
 23 MR. PEREZ: 2.0?  
 24 MR. TRIAS: 2.0, and 2.5 would be the  
 25 bonus.

1 Now, that's an issue that you are  
 2 discussing at this point, but that is what's in  
 3 the text of the Ordinance.  
 4 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Chair, how are we going to  
 5 do this today? Are we going to make -- I mean,  
 6 at the end of the conversation and discussions,  
 7 are we going to make a motion to approve  
 8 something or --  
 9 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Well, we are in between  
 10 that stage between First and Second Reading.  
 11 So they're looking for recommendations, as I  
 12 understand it. The City Commission is looking  
 13 for some input on some of the areas we've been  
 14 talking about.  
 15 MR. TRIAS: Right.  
 16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: And so I think what we  
 17 ought to do, we have a Staff recommendation,  
 18 which seems to follow the will of the  
 19 Commission, and so we can maybe add comments to  
 20 that, either recommend approval, like as it's  
 21 presented, or like we would any other time, or  
 22 approval with some modifications. And there's  
 23 two before us. One is related to the Master  
 24 Plan and then --  
 25 MR. TRIAS: The Comp Plan and the Zoning

1 Text.  
 2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: And then the Zoning  
 3 Text, correct.  
 4 MR. TRIAS: No, both do the same thing. So  
 5 the concepts don't change.  
 6 MR. BEHAR: I will make a motion to approve  
 7 the Staff recommendation with the -- you know,  
 8 a modification is to increase the FAR from 2.5  
 9 to 2.75.  
 10 MR. WU: Mr. Chair, I suggest we have  
 11 different motions. Item Number 5 is the  
 12 Comprehensive Plan. That is strictly dealing  
 13 with the density, to a hundred dwelling units  
 14 per acre. The FAR and the unit size pertain to  
 15 Item Number 6, which is the Zoning --  
 16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yeah, we will, but  
 17 let's --  
 18 MR. LEEN: You can do separate  
 19 recommendations as to each, by motion, but it  
 20 will be good to hear them --  
 21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: We will. We're going  
 22 to go down them separately, but let's get the  
 23 thought.  
 24 MR. LEEN: Exactly.  
 25 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: We always like to get

1 all of the thought processes out on the table,  
 2 and then we step back and motion one and then  
 3 the other.  
 4 So, Robert, you were saying --  
 5 MR. BEHAR: I will recommend the a hundred  
 6 units per acre. I will recommend increasing to  
 7 2.75. And I will recommend that the smallest  
 8 units would be 575 square feet.  
 9 I am perfectly fine with no limit on how  
 10 many you can do, because, at the end of the  
 11 day, you know, it really doesn't matter to us.  
 12 Those would be my recommendation, a hundred  
 13 units, 2.75 FAR, and minimum unit sizes, 575.  
 14 MR. BELLIN: I'll second it.  
 15 MR. LEEN: And just to be clear, those  
 16 would be the amounts with architectural  
 17 incentives?  
 18 MR. BEHAR: That's correct, yes.  
 19 MR. LEEN: Okay.  
 20 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. And that  
 21 would -- once we get to it, that would be  
 22 towards Item 6. So, don't worry, we'll take a  
 23 step back, like we always do, but we have a  
 24 motion and a second on the table.  
 25 And, Frank, you started to say something.

1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. Are we still able to  
2 have questions?

3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Of course.

4 MR. RODRIGUEZ: All right. Look, I have a  
5 question for you, Ramon. With regard to the  
6 unit sizes, if you have less units, with more  
7 rooms, wouldn't you have less need for parking,  
8 and, you know, less traffic, because if you  
9 have more rooms, you don't necessarily assume  
10 that more rooms means you're going to have, you  
11 know, adults or driving age roommates, you  
12 could have children, for example?

13 So isn't the circumstance where you have  
14 larger units, with more rooms, when you're  
15 comparing that to a circumstance where you have  
16 smaller units, with less rooms, and more of  
17 them, wouldn't you necessarily have less  
18 traffic?

19 MR. TRIAS: Yes. And I think that the key  
20 is that, more of them. You will have less  
21 units, because they're larger, so -- in a  
22 general sense, yes, traffic will be less.

23 MR. BELLIN: Then the problem becomes, what  
24 we're trying to do is arrive at a rent that's  
25 affordable. That's the bottom line. A

1 three-bedroom unit is going to rent for \$6,000.  
2 For me, it makes no sense.

3 MR. TRIAS: Yeah, and certainly a developer  
4 can build less units than a hundred units per  
5 acre that are larger. That's a choice.

6 MR. BEHAR: Exactly.

7 MR. TRIAS: Yeah.

8 MR. BEHAR: And if they want to do -- you  
9 know, what it is-is, if they want to do a  
10 hundred units, small units, it's going to be a  
11 smaller building, but -- so you're not going to  
12 get as tall a building or as big of a building,  
13 because the units may be smaller.

14 MS. MENENDEZ: But realistically that  
15 doesn't really happen --

16 MR. BEHAR: No, that's why I don't have --

17 MS. MENENDEZ: -- if they have the  
18 potential to build all that's being proposed.

19 MR. BEHAR: But you're capping the density,  
20 so it doesn't matter.

21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: But does anybody ever  
22 leave density and floor area on the table?

23 MR. BEHAR: Yes. Yes. Yes.

24 MR. PEREZ: What was the question?

25 MR. BEHAR: Unfortunately, yes.

1 MR. PEREZ: What was the question?

2 MS. MENENDEZ: What recent project --

3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Does anybody ever leave  
4 density and square footage on the table?

5 MR. PEREZ: Absolutely.

6 MS. MENENDEZ: These seem --

7 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

8 MR. LEEN: Wait. Wait. Wait. One at a  
9 time, please.

10 MR. PEREZ: I think, in my opinion, what's  
11 being proposed gives the developer and the  
12 builder flexibility, because to Robert's point,  
13 I think it's a great idea to go to a maximum of  
14 2.75, because that gives you flexibility to go  
15 over and above amenities. Once again, if I  
16 want to build something that I feel was a void  
17 in the market, and I want to deliver nice  
18 amenities, I had the flexibility, because now I  
19 could go up to the 2.75.

20 But to your question, absolutely. Density  
21 and FAR is left on the table all of the time,  
22 because there are developers and there are  
23 builders that feel that bigger isn't always  
24 necessarily better. Now, at the end of the  
25 day, it's a matter of being comfortable with

1 the product that you're delivering and  
2 designing, ultimately, once again, that you  
3 feel that you're delivering something to the  
4 market that's going to be well received.

5 So I'm of the opinion that what's being  
6 proposed, with the 2.75, with the density of a  
7 hundred units per acre, and the minimum size, I  
8 believe we're giving flexibility to future  
9 builders to work within that realm of filling a  
10 void of what is required in that portion of the  
11 City.

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I have another follow-up  
13 question --

14 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: -- regarding an item that  
16 we touched upon earlier, about the possibility.

17 And I take very -- I know, your opinion and  
18 Alberto's, I weigh, you know, very seriously,  
19 regarding the compilation of lots, you know,  
20 getting the lots together, and I understand  
21 from what both of you have said that that is  
22 difficult -- economically difficult to do, and  
23 hasn't happened a great deal up to now.

24 And my question is, with the changes that  
25 are being proposed, assuming that the

1 Resolution or the motion -- I'm sorry, the  
 2 motion that Robert has proposed passes, and  
 3 let's say that the Commission then, upon our  
 4 recommendation, acts upon it and passes it in  
 5 the City Commission, would that circumstance,  
 6 the fact that now you're talking with totally  
 7 new rules that apply to parcels of 20,000  
 8 square feet or greater, would that -- might  
 9 that possibly change the economic equation, so  
 10 something that has not happened too much in the  
 11 past, all of a sudden becomes not only  
 12 economically viable, but maybe economically,  
 13 you know, something that people are looking to  
 14 do, and, you know, that concerns me somewhat?  
 15 MR. TRIAS: Certainly the conditions will  
 16 change, yes, and there will be some of that,  
 17 but I think that the time frame that we're  
 18 talking about, in terms of major change, will  
 19 be very long. And I say that, because Coral  
 20 Gables is a very strong market, and there are  
 21 very few vacant properties. There are  
 22 buildings everywhere.  
 23 Now, in my prior experience, where I've had  
 24 the chance to work in cities that were not  
 25 Coral Gables and they didn't have the economic

1 vitality that Coral Gables has, an image like  
 2 that aerial photograph will be mostly vacant,  
 3 and then I would say, yes, certainly things are  
 4 going to change dramatically, because look at  
 5 all of this vacant land, because of -- that's  
 6 not the case here. That's not the case.  
 7 The other thing is, as I said before, you  
 8 have reinforced and encouraged the preservation  
 9 of some of the fabric of the smaller buildings.  
 10 Those are very dense. Those buildings have  
 11 comparable densities to what we're talking  
 12 about here. It's just that they don't look it,  
 13 because they're small, but they have value.  
 14 They certainly have value.  
 15 So if you ask me a question, do I believe  
 16 that in the next, let's say, five years, all of  
 17 a sudden every parcel is going to be assembled  
 18 into -- no, I don't believe so. In the next  
 19 fifty years, I don't know. But, certainly, in  
 20 the immediate future, I think what we have is  
 21 pretty much close to what we're going to get,  
 22 except for the parcels that have been assembled  
 23 already, and probably we will get a better  
 24 chance of re-development along Ponce de Leon.  
 25 I think it's more likely that assemblages will

1 take place there.  
 2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Anybody else?  
 3 MR. LEEN: So, Mr. Chair, with the motion  
 4 as to the Comp Plan change, which is Attachment  
 5 A, it looks like the motion is consistent with  
 6 the Staff recommendation, with the current  
 7 writing, because right now it would be 75 units  
 8 per acre, up to a hundred with architectural  
 9 incentives. It doesn't address FAR.  
 10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Correct.  
 11 MR. TRIAS: The FAR, the recommendation was  
 12 2.5. They are recommending maybe 2.75.  
 13 MS. MENENDEZ: The Staff recommends 2.5.  
 14 MR. TRIAS: Yes.  
 15 MS. MENENDEZ: And do you have a minimum  
 16 square footage in your recommendation? I  
 17 didn't see it.  
 18 MR. TRIAS: It is in the text of the  
 19 Ordinance, and it's 650.  
 20 MS. MENENDEZ: Right. The Ordinance I saw,  
 21 but it's not in your recommendation.  
 22 MR. TRIAS: That is the recommendations.  
 23 We're recommending that Ordinance.  
 24 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay.  
 25 MR. LEEN: Ms. Menendez, what I meant was,

1 the proposed Comp Plan change, the Text that's  
 2 on Page 2 of Attachment A, right now it's 75  
 3 units per acre or a hundred with architectural  
 4 incentives. It sounds like you're not  
 5 addressing the height, which is up to a hundred  
 6 feet maximum, with architectural incentives.  
 7 Those are the only two things that are  
 8 addressed by the Comp Plan.  
 9 MR. TRIAS: The Staff recommendation is a  
 10 hundred feet, which is about three or four feet  
 11 more than what we allow typically. That allows  
 12 a much better fit for parking. So it does make  
 13 a difference. So we believe that's important.  
 14 MR. LEEN: So, Mr. Chair, the point --  
 15 Mr. Behar, are you okay -- is your motion  
 16 consistent with that? Do you want to keep it  
 17 the way it is? The Comp Plan change.  
 18 MR. BEHAR: Yes. Yes, it is, because this  
 19 is going from 75 to a hundred, and from 97 feet  
 20 to a hundred feet, correct?  
 21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.  
 22 MR. LEEN: Yes.  
 23 MR. BEHAR: And it doesn't mention FAR  
 24 here.  
 25 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: No.



Page 69

1 MS. MENENDEZ: No, it doesn't.  
2 MR. TRIAS: The Comp Plan deals with  
3 density.  
4 MR. BEHAR: Yes. I'm --  
5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. So, Robert, do  
6 you want to move Item 5, as recommended?  
7 MR. BEHAR: I'll make a motion to move Item  
8 5, as per Attachment A.  
9 MR. PEREZ: I'll second it.  
10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Motion and a second.  
11 Any further comment on that item? That's the  
12 one that says it's 75 units to the acre or a  
13 hundred with Med Bonus and up to a hundred feet  
14 max.  
15 Okay. Hearing none, Jill, call the roll,  
16 please.  
17 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?  
18 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.  
19 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?  
20 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.  
21 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?  
22 MR. PEREZ: Yes.  
23 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?  
24 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No.  
25 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

Page 70

1 MR. BEHAR: Yes.  
2 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?  
3 MR. BELLIN: Yes.  
4 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?  
5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.  
6 All right. Robert, was your earlier motion  
7 that had some changes to the Staff rec for Item  
8 Number 6?  
9 MR. WU: The changes pertain to Page 3 of  
10 the Ordinance. If I can reference Item 4.C.  
11 What I --  
12 MR. BEHAR: Yeah. I'll make a motion to  
13 approve Item 6, under Attachment B, with the  
14 modification that the FAR, under 4.C goes from  
15 a 2.0 to 2.5, be changed to 2.0 to 2.75 FAR.  
16 MR. PEREZ: With Mediterranean Bonuses?  
17 MR. BEHAR: With Mediterranean Bonus,  
18 correct.  
19 MR. PEREZ: I'll second it.  
20 MS. MENENDEZ: I'm sorry, you're saying, on  
21 Attachment B, which are the proposed changes?  
22 MR. BEHAR: 4.C -- under 4.C, which is the  
23 FAR, currently it says in this --  
24 MS. MENENDEZ: You want to change it to  
25 2.75?

Page 71

1 MR. BEHAR: Exactly. From 2.0 to 2.75.  
2 MR. WU: And E pertains to the size.  
3 MR. TRIAS: And there you have two options.  
4 You could propose a different number or simply  
5 eliminate it and be silent.  
6 MR. BEHAR: I will say, on E, as well --  
7 thank you, Charles -- on E to reduce that  
8 number to 575, as it's currently in the Zoning  
9 Code.  
10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay.  
11 MR. PEREZ: I'll second it.  
12 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: A motion and a second.  
13 Do we have any discussion on that one?  
14 Hearing none, call the roll, please, Jill.  
15 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?  
16 MS. MENENDEZ: No.  
17 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?  
18 MR. PEREZ: Yes.  
19 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?  
20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No.  
21 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?  
22 MR. BEHAR: Yes.  
23 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?  
24 MR. BELLIN: Yes.  
25 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?

Page 72

1 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.  
2 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?  
3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: No.  
4 All right. So that's 5 and 6.  
5 MS. MENENDEZ: What else?  
6 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: We have one more item  
7 on the agenda.  
8 MR. TRIAS: Thank you very much.  
9 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: You're welcome.  
10 Next item is Item Number 7. This is an  
11 Ordinance of the City of Commission of Coral  
12 Gables, Florida providing for a text amendment  
13 to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning  
14 Code by amending Article 4, "Zoning Districts,"  
15 Section 4-206, "Business Improvement Overlay  
16 District" to include special provisions for all  
17 properties within the District such as  
18 pedestrian-oriented signage, hours of  
19 operation, and outdoor dining; providing for a  
20 repealer provision, providing for a  
21 severability clause, codification and providing  
22 for an effective date.  
23 (Thereupon, Mr. Perez left the Commission  
24 Chambers.)  
25 MR. TRIAS: May I have the PowerPoint,