

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 11, 2021

8:30 AM

The Board meets the second Thursday of every month.
Coral Gables Youth Center, 405 University Drive, Coral Gables, FL
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

CALL TO ORDER

This is an unofficial meeting. Meeting began at 8:38am.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Carlos Hernandez

Nancy Leslie

Charlie Rua

Felix Pardo

Monica C. Segura-Virtually

Absent:

Desmond Gonzalez

The Landscape Beautification Advisory Board (LBAB) was invited by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) to attend the Ponce Circle Park presentation.

PRESENTATION

a. Ponce Circle Park Conceptual Design presented by Urban Robot

Presenter: Justine Velez, Owner/Associated of Urban Robot Associates, 420 Lincoln Rd 6th Floor, Miami Beach, FL 33139. This presentation is a preliminary concept of the Ponce Circle Park Project with a Coral Gables Mediterranean Style. The project will consist of Phase I and Phase II.

Ms. Velez advised a public meeting was held in December of 2019 and the community provided their input. The results revealed the community's desire for shade, greenery and seating, respectively. See page 4 of the attached drawings for details. An overview of the design was provided. The design includes walking paths, artistic benches and four grand entrances. There are ornamental monuments intended to designate that this is a park district. On the south side of the park there is an existing lawn space which can be used for events. This is also a perfect location for an interactive sculpture. On the north side of the park there will be a pergola. Surrounding the park there will be a "stupendous" mini botanical garden called a Rainbow Ring. Surrounding the park will be flowering trees that will showcase colorful blooms throughout the seasons. It will provide a colorful appearance all year around. See page 15 for a list of the floral trees. Canopy trees, shrubs and ground cover will also be included. See pages 21 – 24 for a plant pallet.

Since the Ponce Circle Park is surrounded by roads, several elements have been proposed to ensure public safety. Please note, the following proposals will need to be approval by Miami Dade County.

- Straight roads.**
- Reduced traffic speed to 25 mph.**
- Narrow traffic lane width to 10 feet.**
- Raised roadway.**
- Enhanced sidewalks and crosswalks with planters and trees.**
- Advanced warning pavement marking to alert awareness of pedestrians.**

The following concerns were expressed by those in attendance.

- A request was made for a shade study to avoid the overlap of the shade coming from the existing buildings.**

- The monuments at the park entrance should be placed "after" the crosswalk, to avoid vehicular blind spots.**

•A request for a physical barrier to ensure the safety of the children in the park. Both boards present wanted to make official note for the minutes that they are in full support of the sentiments Felix Pardo expressed in regard to the importance of some kind of barrier around the park if children were expected to use the open space or any park structures.

•A request was made for the plant palette to include the Royal Poinciana tree. Ms. Velez replied the Royal Poinciana tree will be added to the plant palette.

•An inquiry was made on the possibility of sound control during an event area. A removable sound attenuation with a permit requirement will be reviewed.

•An inquiry was made on the care of the lawn in the event area. Ms. Velez advised there are several options. She mentioned preparation of groundwork, proper drainage or installation of geo ground grids. Artificial turf can also be considered. This will be reviewed.

Ms. Velez expressed appreciation for the comments/concerns. She reassured they will be reviewed.

It was noted that due to the lack of a quorum, motions could not to be formalized.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Accreditation Review:

- Public Information Policy and Procedure
- Leadership Succession Plan
- Risk Management Policy
- Risk Management Plan and Procedures to include Building Security Plan

Items will be pushed to the next board meeting

b. Board Member at Large Nominations

There have no applications submitted to the City Clerks office or to the board secretary for review to fill the vacancy of the Board-Member-at-Large.

With upcoming elections, administrative staff quickly reviewed the terms of reappointment and updates with the board members present.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Approvals on the Past Design Presentations

- Granada Pro Shop
- Granada Shelters
- Pierce Park

Items will be pushed to the next board meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Catalonia Neighborhood Park

Community Recreation Director Fred Couceyro began the discussion by going over the current issues the City is experiencing with the Catalonia neighborhood park being used as an unofficial dog park. Staff continues to receive emails and phone calls of resident complaints that the park users are bringing in their dogs off leash to use the park at the same time as small children. They believe this is a safety hazard. Another issue is the overuse of the park by the dogs which has caused the grass to die.

In efforts to help curtail dogs being off leash, additional signage will be added at main entrances stating all dogs must remain on leash. Code enforcement and police will need to help in our efforts to enforce leashing rules. Fred also mentioned that staff is also considering re-fencing certain areas of the park or completely prohibiting dogs from entering the park. A course of action has yet to be decided on.

Fred hopes with the construction of the City's new official dog park included in the Underline Project managed by Dade County, that this will relieve a lot of the dog traffic we are experiencing at our pocket parks. However there has not been an estimated timeline submitted for completion. We also hope to start directing residents located in the south to the dog park in Chapman Field Park that will be renovated soon.

Carlos Hernandez also brought up that commuting residents have been visiting this park and parking illegally to access the park. This park was intended to be accessed within walk-ability of homes, not for car traffic. The swales have been damaged, and he has witnessed near-accidents on several occasions. He believes that since residents are under the impression this is a dog park this has increased park usage by nonresidents and commuting residents. He asks staff to include language in the signage of where nearby dog parks are located. Staff will look into incorporating this information into the new signage.

Nancy Leslie asked if no parking signs to be added. Fred and staff were initially thinking to add this signage but fear that removing swale parking will encourage park users to park in neighboring homes.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY

Our next meeting is scheduled for April 8th, 2021 at 8:00am at the Adult Activity Center

ADJOURNMENT

NOTE