

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items F-6, 7, 8 and F-10 are related
July 10, 2018
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Commissioner Michael Mena

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
Assistant City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias

Public Speaker(s)

George Navarro
Robert Behar
Henry Paper

Agenda Items F-6 through F-10 are related [3:35 p.m.]

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting an amendment to the Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review," Division 15, "Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments," and Small Scale amendment procedures (ss. 163.3187, Florida Statutes), from "Multi-Family Medium Density" Land Use to "Mixed Use" Land Use and extending the "North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed-Use Overlay District" for the property legally

City Commission Meeting
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Agenda Items F-6, 7, 8 and F-10 are related - Ordinances requesting an amendment to the Future Land Use Map, granting a Planned Area Development approval, requesting an amendment to the Zoning Map, and a resolution requesting Mixed-Use Site Plan Review for the proposed project, Regency on the Park.

described as Lots 5 to 12, Block 12, Douglas Section (100, 114, and 126 Calabria Avenue and 912 and 918 East Ponce de Leon Boulevard), Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (LPA review) (06 13 18 PZB recommended approval with conditions, Vote 5-0)

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida granting approval of a proposed Planned Area Development (PAD) approval referred to as “Regency on the Park” pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, “Development Review,” Division 5, “Planned Area Development (PAD),” for the construction of a project consisting of a mix of uses including office, live/work, and residential, on the property legally described as Lots 5 to 12, Block 12, Douglas Section (100, 114, and 126 Calabria Avenue and 912 and 918 East Ponce de Leon Boulevard), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (06 13 18 PZB recommended approval, Vote 5-0)

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting an amendment to the Zoning Map pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, “Development Review,” Division 14, “Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments,” to extend the “North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed-Use Overlay District” to include the property legally described as Lots 5 to 12, Block 12, Douglas Section (100, 114, and 126 Calabria Avenue and 912 and 918 East Ponce de Leon Boulevard), Coral Gables, Florida; and providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (06 13 18 PZB recommended approval, Vote 5-0)

A Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting Mixed-Use Site Plan Review pursuant to Zoning Code Article 4, “Zoning Districts,” Division 2, “Overlay and Special Purpose Districts,” Section 4-201, “Mixed Use District (MXD),” for the proposed project referred to as “Regency on the Park” on the property legally described as Lots 5 to 12, Block 12, Douglas Section (100, 114, and 126 Calabria Avenue and 912 and 918 East Ponce de Leon Boulevard), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, providing for a severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (06 13 18 PZB recommended approval with conditions, Vote 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We’ll take up F-6, 7, 8 and 10. Madam City Attorney.

City Attorney Ramos: F -- I will read F-6, F-7 and F-8. F-10 is here for your information and will not be voted on until these come back for second reading. F-6 is an ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting an amendment to the Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review," Division 15, "Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment," and Small Scale amendment procedures, from "Multi-Family Medium Density" Land Use to "Mixed Use" Land Use and extending the "North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed-Use Overlay District" for the property legally described as Lots 5 through 12, Block 12, Douglas Section, Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. F-7 is an ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida granting approval of a proposed Planned Area Development approval referred to as "Regency on the Park" pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review," Division 5, "Planned Area Development," for the construction of a project consisting of a mix of uses including office, live/work, and residential, on the property legally described as Lots 5 to 12, Block 12, Douglas Section, Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. And F-8, an ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting an amendment to the Zoning Map pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review," Division 14, "Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments," to extend the "North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed-Use Overlay District" to include the property legally described as Lots 5 to 12, Block 12, Douglas Section, Coral Gables, Florida; and providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. We should have a public hearing on all three items together. And Mr. Clerk, if you would please swear in anyone who wishes to speak on this item.

City Clerk Foeman: Would you raise your right...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The floor is yours.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Thank you.

City Clerk Foeman: Raise your right hand, please. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the statements you're about to make on this issue will be the truth and nothing but the truth?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'm sorry, what?

City Clerk Foeman: Will be...

Commissioner Keon: Is the truth.

City Clerk Foeman: The truth and nothing but the truth.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I swear. Go ahead.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Mayor and Commissioners, I have a brief PowerPoint. The project that is proposed requires multiple requests, and it may appear complicated from a process point of view, but it's actually a pretty straightforward mixed-use project. That shows you the context. Highlighted in yellow is the actual building. The building is a rendering. It has been inserted in a photograph of the area, so you can see the context that this proposal is in. The reason we have all these requests is related to some of the issues related to open space. This will be the typical floor plate should we not do many of the things that we're doing in this proposal. If this was not an acre, if this was not a PAD, if this was not -- it didn't give us that kind of flexibility, we would have this project. Instead, this is the project that is being proposed, so you can see the difference in terms of open space all around it. So, let's go back and forth a couple times, so you can see the benefits of the project. So, that is the reason we're here. We're here because those different requests allow for a higher quality open space at the ground level. Now, the project is located about a block east of Ponce de Leon, right -- very close to Douglas Entrance, that interesting geometry of the original grid of the City. And what happened is that

some time ago, you may recall, you had a chance to deal with the redevelopment ideas for North Ponce, and one of those ideas was an overlay along Ponce de Leon Boulevard that encouraged -- in fact, required mixed-use development. So, part of the request is to include this parcel into that overlay, which is right adjacent to it. Now, originally, you may recall, we went back and forth a few times in terms of the actual location of that boundary. It moved a few times, but there was always an understanding that there could be an opportunity in the future should a project have enough area, that that boundary could be amended. So, that is one of the requests that is taking place today. Now, the conceptual rendering, as you can see, it's a mixed-use project with an arcade and a live/work downstairs, parking, some commercial also included in the upper stories, and then residential. There are four requests. There's a Comprehensive Plan amendment. There's also a Zoning Code map amendment, just the map. There's no change of zoning to commercial, just simply the overlay boundaries being changed. Then there's the Planned Area Development, which allows for many of the, I think, better features of the design, especially at the ground level, and then the mixed-use site plan. The Comprehensive Plan amendment is to the land use of mixed use. Now, that, in our view, is a better way of dealing with mixed use than changing to a commercial land use, which allows too many different things. I think you have a better way to control the future development with a mixed-use site land use. There's also the amendment of the boundary, of the overlay for the Ponce de Leon mixed use. As you can see, the boundary changes slightly. And then, there's the PAD, the PAD, which requires the different features. And you can see the arcade, the open space, and the way that the overall layout of the design. Finally, the mixed-use plan, again, is shown here diagrammatically. The architect will explain in more detail -- encourages a very active ground level with the live/work units, and also, some retail, some strategically located retail that encourages pedestrian activity. The timeline for review, the Development Review Committee took place in January. Then the Board of Architects had multiple meetings. Eventually, it was approved in April. Then, the neighborhood meeting that is required by Code, took place in May. Then Planning and Zoning, in June, and today, we're here with the first reading at the City Commission. As always, the case in these projects, all of the different departments have had a chance to review the project and propose comments. We also had a chance to notice by mail people within 1,500 feet, which is the

maximum that we do for these types of requests. There were also multiple public notices; three times we had mail notice, three times we had the property posted, four times we had the web posting, and we had the newspaper advertisement for Planning and Zoning. Finally, staff's recommendation is approval for the first two requests, and approval with conditions, for the PAD and for the mixed-use request. That concludes my presentation, and I believe the applicant has a brief PowerPoint also.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And there was a unanimous recommendation by all the boards, right?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead, sir.

George Navarro: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, Commissioners. Good afternoon. It's my distinct pleasure to be here today. This project is the culmination of a lot of hard work. It's a process and a project that I think started almost 30 years ago, when the Mayor was 18 and was in his first term as Mayor that he had -- he wanted to see something happen in the North Ponce area. And it was recently championed by Commissioner Keon, who brought this legislation...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I don't get no respect.

Mr. Navarro: Youngest Mayor elected, by the way. Commissioner Keon championed the North Ponce overlay regulations, and then these standards have been fine-tuned by Commissioner Lago and his vision for ensuring the legacy of green space, open space and paseos as part of the North Ponce community. So, this is a project that has a lot of input from a lot of important people. And we are very excited to be the first project to be coming in under the North Ponce area, as your Planning and Zoning Director said. This is part of the infill area, and we're being as to be included as a PAD -- it's one of the few large parcels and large properties in the North Ponce area that's over an acre in size. We're asking to be part of the North Ponce Mixed Used District.

The project is 151 units. It's a 12-story building. It's 130 feet in building height, but this project actually is less than what the site-specific standards allow for this site, which is up to 150 feet in building height. We have...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'm sorry. Say that again.

Mr. Navarro: So, the site-specific standards...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Mr. Navarro: For this project or this property allow up to 150 feet in building height, and we are building 130 feet in building height.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Mr. Navarro: And as you can see from the first exhibit here on the far left, next to Robert, the building is actually very much in line with the massing and the height that already exists in the area. There's a great exhibit that was put together by your Planning Director. We have, to the immediate west and east of our buildings; we have between 10- and 12-story office buildings, which, as you may know, office buildings have a higher floor to ceiling height, so these are actually almost about 15-story buildings. And then, directly to our east, we have a 14-story building. So, in terms of massing, we are very much in line, if not less than what's existing there today. But most importantly, the reason that we're asking for this PAD is to achieve some flexibility in design. And while there is a minor increase in density, there are also some extensive public benefits that we've been able to achieve. I know that one of the items that the Commission, especially Commissioner Lago, wanted to see is additional open spaces within the North Ponce area. And, what we've been able to do is we're providing almost four times more open space than what the existing regulations require and two times the amount of open space than what the PAD regulations require. And this is not open space that's in the upper levels. I

know that Commissioner Mena always asks about that. This is ground floor open space, and it is green, and it is in civic plazas, and it's also in a cross-pedestrian paseo that we've been able to accommodate. And, we have approximately 42 percent open space at the ground level. As part of this, we want to work with the City to dedicate an approximately 5,500 or 6,000 square foot linear park. It's directly to the far left of the project, where Robert is pointing to. That would be something that would be for the community enjoyment. One of the other things that the PAD allows us to accomplish are additional step backs and setbacks. This project, as you can see on the far eastern side, has a very large setback from the existing multifamily residential building that's located directly to the east on the other side of East Ponce. And, one of the other things that we've been able to do is we have varying levels of upper level step backs. So, normally, the Code requires you to step back above 45 feet in height. But, as Robert will explain, we are actually creating two different step backs above the arcade, one at 30 feet and one at 45 feet. And what this does is allows you to break up the massing of the building and provide for some more articulation in design. The project has multiple frontages, as you can see. We have a civic space. We have Calabria Avenue. We have Santillane. We have East Ponce. And all of these frontages have been activated. One of the things that your Planning and Zoning Board suggested was that we look at a way of creating walkup units for the live/work units. This is an area where we thought that your pure retail use would not really be as viable as more of a live/work unit, where you could have young professionals and young entrepreneurs, maybe some artists that could have their workspace here. And, what we've done is we've created live/work units that have walkup and urban features. They all front the park as well, and the project is fully activated on all of the different frontages. We've also gone ahead and incorporated another suggestion that was incorporated or recommended by your Planning and Zoning Board, which was to try to push the building further to East Ponce in order to create some additional park space. And, Robert did a great job going ahead and modifying the plan and incorporating these comments. As recently as last week, we went back to your Board of Architects and they have conceptually approved of all these changes, so this project's been fully vetted by your Board of Architects and unanimously recommended for approval by your Planning and Zoning Board, and we hope that

we could have your support here today. With that, I'd like to introduce our project architect, Robert Behar, who could walk you through the site.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, sir.

Robert Behar: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor, Commissioners. For the record, Robert Behar, Behar Font & Partners, 4533 Ponce de Leon. Before I start, I'd like to make sure to introduce Mr. Henry Paper, the developer, back here. And from the office, Daniela and (INAUDIBLE). Raymundo is going to help. Reynaldo, sorry. This has been -- before I start, I want to commend staff because we have been working long with staff and they have pushed us to the point where we have created a much better project. I don't want them to hear that too much, but they have done a great job. This is a very exciting project because, as George stated, we are creating a public benefit. We are creating spaces that are going to be beneficial to the residents in the area. And, part of the comments that we received at the Planning and Zoning meeting is that to introduce -- and we have our presentation. I've showed you -- you already saw the context. It's actually -- go forward. Alright, you already saw where we are incorporating 100 percent of the property. We're activating it. And, this is one of the comments that the Planning and Zoning had. They made us or suggested that we push the building towards the east, so we could open and have work/live units on -- fronting the park on the west side and bring around East Ponce, which I think turned out to be great, because now you have truly residential units, which I'll show you a rendering shortly, that are fronting the street frontage, which is really nice to activate. What we also did by doing that is we internalized all the services. So, you see a drive on Calabria and a drive on the bottom and that's it. You don't see anything else. All the services, the entrance to the garage, everything's internalized, which I thought that was a very good, you know, solution to the project. As George has stated, it pushed the building on the west side towards the created park. That park is approximately 5,500 square feet, units fronting it. But we also set the building back along East Ponce. We have like a 45-, 50-foot setback there. We also created a nice open space, so it's on both sides. This one just tells you the amount of open space -- I think that was discussed already -- how the frontage of the building, the garage.

We have three levels of parking, all concealed. When we get to the fifth level is where we step it back. On the first -- on the -- up to level -- second level is at 30 feet. We step it back, as George mentioned. When we get back to the fifth level, we even step it back even further. And something that we're doing is we're wrapping the building around, so we have multiple façades as illustrated in that rendering at the back. So, you see the -- we're breaking the mass. It's not just one volume. We're breaking it, so you have different -- you address the street differently at all conditions. The building will consist of 151 -- 152 units. I'm not -- George mentioned 151. I thought it was 152, but nevertheless, it's all units. And then, at the penthouse, we step it even further back. Elevations, just to see the different façades. But, I think that the massing -- Ramon already explained to you contextually how we are even lower than the existing office building and lower than the existing residential, and actually, much lower than the Douglas Entrance, which is there. The rendering, as you can see -- some of the comments that we -- that George mentioned -- we went back to the Board of Architects not once, not twice, but three times, as recent as last week. We introduced some of the comments that were sent to us or suggested at the P and Z. We introduced them, and they were very receptive, very happy. And we went back and added, you know, elements -- the trellises and all, just to make it more cohesiveness on the project. As you see, that's a rendering that you see the park, East Ponce. And our plaza entrance, which will incorporate -- we'll come back to that. That's the entrance -- the main entrance to the building. We'll incorporate some art in public space. We'll come back to that. So, that's going to be the plaza location which will be at the corner, which will be accessible and appeals to everybody at the ground level. Some of the details, the trellises, the little details that we're doing. And the landscaping plan. But that concludes my presentation. If you have any questions, I'll be more than happy to answer.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Questions, Vice Mayor?

Commissioner Keon: I have a question about the -- you have the -- an open -- is that just the driveway or is there pedestrian access to that also? No, no, no. In the center. That's only for cars.

Mr. Behar: Yeah. That's only vehicular.

Commissioner Keon: It's only a vehicular cut-through.

Mr. Behar: Commissioner, what we have is -- I'll speak (INAUDIBLE) -- what we have is the arcade that comes in from there...

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Mr. Behar: (INAUDIBLE) and the arcade connects to the park...

Commissioner Keon: It connects...

Mr. Behar: On this side.

Commissioner Keon: To the park. So, you get a walk-through there.

Mr. Behar: You get to walk through...

Commissioner Keon: Okay. Thank you, yeah. Because...

Mr. Behar: So...

Commissioner Keon: One of the things...

Mr. Behar: (INAUDIBLE) have access to the park.

Commissioner Keon: Okay. Because, one of the things we wanted to do in those large areas was to be able to have midblock cut-throughs.

Mr. Behar: That's...

Commissioner Keon: And that...

Mr. Behar: That's the reason we did that.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Mr. Behar: That will be...

Commissioner Keon: You know...

Mr. Behar: As the midblock. Since we don't control the east side...

Commissioner Keon: But...

Mr. Behar: Ideally, that would be the connector.

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mr. Behar: But since we don't have that, we put the midblock through our property so you...

Commissioner Keon: Which is good.

Mr. Behar: Connect.

Commissioner Keon: So, you don't have those big, long blocks of development. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Mr. Behar: You're welcome.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner Lago.

Commissioner Lago: Quick question, in regards to your art in public places, what is your plan for art in public places?

Mr. Navarro: Doors.

Commissioner Lago: Doors?

Mr. Navarro: We thought some very nice doors...

Commissioner Lago: Windows?

Mr. Navarro: At the entrance to the park. No, in all honesty, Mr. Paper is here with us.

Commissioner Lago: Will you be donating to the art in public...

Mr. Navarro: One of the things that we wanted...

Commissioner Lago: Places fund?

Mr. Navarro: To do was Robert, with Ramon's input, has been able to design this very nice public plaza on the northeast corner of the project, and that is an area where either, you know,

within the City-owned property, which is the right-of-way, or within our property, we would like to come in and actually...

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Mr. Navarro: Provide that artwork on site since this last process that we went through...

Commissioner Lago: There's a great...

Mr. Navarro: Went so smoothly with staff.

Commissioner Lago: There's a great list of artists that Dona Spain can give you, which are world-class artists. And I think that you should take a look at that. You know, I think it will complement your building very well.

Mr. Navarro: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: I want to mention a few things, and I want to talk about the developer, in particular. I've been meeting with Henry -- it's probably been about two years now we've been discussing this project. And you know, to me, this piece of property is very important because my grandfather, when he came to this country, he lived across the street and he was an accountant. So, I'm very familiar with this area. He lived in a very small apartment with my grandmother, and we used to walk -- this is my mom's parents. So, I'm very familiar with this area, and I think this piece of property's been vacant for a long time, since they demolished those buildings. And, if you look at the project that has been designed today by Robert Behar and his partner, to me, this is what I think urban living should be, in my opinion. And I have stated on the record -- I know my colleagues are supportive of me on this. We're willing to give a little bit more density and a little bit more intensity if the project really has that public benefit. And, Commissioner Keon has led the charge in regards to the North Gables. Look at this project when

you talk about ground floor open space. And Ramon Trias is working on it, along with our outside consultant, Liz Plater-Zyberk, to really finalize our open space legislation or ordinance that will hopefully bring before us soon. But, when you talk about -- I think you said 42 percent ground floor open space, and I don't know how much green space. This is what I think is why -- when people are living in smaller units and they have a park adjacent to their property or a piece of green space, like you have in front, it just makes it even more of a...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It is a wonderful project.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah. It's a more friendly atmosphere. There's really good quality of life. It's not that urban concrete jungle that, for some reason, we've become so accustomed to. This is what -- when projects have becoming -- have been coming before the Commission, we will grant a bonus. We will grant a bonus, but again, you have to make a commitment. And, I know that you went out of your way and you negotiated with a neighbor. You spent money to buy the adjacent property so that you could provide, you know, a piece of open space which, again, will pay dividends not only for the City, but also, for your bottom line, which I think is -- which is very good. So, I want to commend you on that. I want to commend the architect on really, you know, putting together a very beautiful project. And, I think it's going to change the character of the neighborhood significantly.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Commissioner Mena.

Commissioner Mena: I couldn't have said it better myself. I just want to echo Commissioner Lago's sentiments. I had a meeting with you all yesterday to be briefed on this, and it was sort of a pleasure, as those meetings go, because every question I -- well, here's the neighboring building. It's taller than us. Here's the other -- it's taller than us, too. We bought a property and built a park. Like, okay, somebody's listening. So...

Commissioner Lago: Somebody's listening.

Commissioner Mena: No, really. So, you know, and it was really a pleasure and I really appreciate your efforts. I think it's a beautiful project. I think it's great for the area. You know, what's there now doesn't really service this neighborhood in any way, and I think the addition of not only this nice building, but the park is a great benefit to this area, which is, frankly, you know, in need of more parks because of the density in the area. So, overall, I think it's a great thing and I appreciate your efforts to get to this point. I know it's been a long haul for you all, so thank you.

Commissioner Lago: You know what's another...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: Thing you can mention -- another thing you can mention -- none of us mentioned and you have to play it up is that there's a trolley that stops...

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Right in front of this property.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: So, when you're talking about you want to rent a one-bedroom and you want to have an assistant or a junior attorney, accountant, architect stay in the City of Coral Gables and be within five minutes of their job, I mean, this is what we've been hoping for. This is the type of product; live, work, play, so a person can be within -- you know, right in the city, stay in the city.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I echo those statements.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What?

Vice Mayor Quesada: I echo the same statements.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. Now, I think this is a wonderful, wonderful project. And it goes a long way in doing what we are trying to achieve in North Gables in this Ponce corridor. It really has been neglected forever. As a matter of fact, I shouldn't say this, but I'll say it. In my opinion, the ugliest building in Coral Gables is very close to there.

Vice Mayor Quesada: What building is that?

Unidentified Speaker: I'm glad you said that.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What?

Vice Mayor Quesada: He said he's glad he didn't say it about the building.

Unidentified Speaker: (INAUDIBLE) existing building.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, no, no, no. It's close to there. And I think it's a wonderful, wonderful thing you're doing. And I congratulate you. And I will entertain a motion.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Wait. Here's...

Commissioner Keon: I would like....

Vice Mayor Quesada: One...

City Attorney Ramos: Public hearing item.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Small thing. Hold on, one small thing. Man, I don't want to see anymore palm trees, even on the renderings.

Commissioner Keon: Oh, palm...

Vice Mayor Quesada: We want people...

Commissioner Keon: Trees are...

Vice Mayor Quesada: We want...

Commissioner Keon: Beautiful.

Vice Mayor Quesada: People walking around. We want shade.

Commissioner Lago: Oak. Oak trees. Shade trees.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Big oak and...

Commissioner Lago: (INAUDIBLE) shade.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Here's another thing. You guys did a -- I think you designed the project...

Unidentified Speaker: Oh, boy.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Gables Residential, near La Palma. That project back there -- and we had that park, and the idea is to have all the shade and it never ended up happening. George is not the attorney on that.

Mr. Navarro: Nope.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And I drive by and I get mad whenever I drive by now.

Commissioner Keon: On Columbus?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Because...

Commissioner Keon: On Columbus...

Vice Mayor Quesada: On Columbus, because that...

Commissioner Keon: The Columbus project.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Park -- if you remember, I stopped it because they wanted to do all concrete. I go no; let's make it grass. Put a lot of shade. Let's put some benches, so people can actually use it...

Commissioner Lago: I remember.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Because it's just a concrete jungle there.

Commissioner Keon: They never -- right.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And now, what they did, they put a little bit of fake grass and there's no shade, so you still see no one using it. So, can I have an agreement from everyone here on this? Massive shade trees so that when you walk outside a building, you have shade and you can walk around on the sidewalk. Don't give me an excuse. Just say yes.

Mr. Behar: Absolutely.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Okay.

Mr. Behar: Just to let you know.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Because it adds up. It adds up over time, because what ends up happening is -- I don't know -- why is it that developers always want to put palm trees in? What is that?

Commissioner Keon: But palm...

Unidentified Speaker: Cheaper.

Commissioner Keon: Trees are pretty.

Vice Mayor Quesada: It's cheaper? Is it that much cheaper?

Mr. Behar: It's not cheaper.

Unidentified Speaker: So...

Commissioner Keon: No, no.

Mr. Behar: The project you...

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Mr. Behar: Referenced...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, thank you.

Mr. Behar: The project you referenced, unfortunately, that plaza was not really part of the scope of work from us. It was something that the old administration...

Vice Mayor Quesada: No. I know what ended up happening, because I spoke to the Attorney on that.

Commissioner Keon: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: The art in public places was going to be in the park, and they decided, hey, we're not going to do it.

Commissioner Lago: And there was a water...

Vice Mayor Quesada: We'll just give a donation.

Commissioner Lago: It was a water feature that looked like an earth.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: And it looked like a globe, and then it had some steel trees that...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah. And then I -- if you remember, we stopped it...

Commissioner Keon: (INAUDIBLE) pretty.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And said...

Commissioner Lago: That didn't work. That didn't work out so well.

Vice Mayor Quesada: No, it doesn't work. But the point is -- I'm sorry for digressing and talking about another project, but the point is, man, when this is built, I won't be sitting here. So, I'm looking at all these people here say, please, massive shade trees. So, when the next project comes along, they have massive shade trees.

Commissioner Lago: Robert, just so you -- just...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's...

Commissioner Lago: I want to add on what Commissioner Quesada just said. This is not the first time you say this. If you go to the last meeting...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: I brought up the fact that calipers, let's increase the caliper of the trees. Don't put these trees that take 15, 20 years to just...

Vice Mayor Quesada: People love the Gables.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: It's because we have the massive tree...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Because of the trees.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Canopy. That's...

Commissioner Lago: And we're not pick...

Vice Mayor Quesada: (INAUDIBLE) that.

Commissioner Lago: We're not picking on you. We're not picking on you.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Well...

Commissioner Lago: We're not picking on you.

Mr. Behar: Do me a favor. Look this way when you say that because...

Commissioner Lago: No, because I said it at the last property -- last project. You were here. At the last project, I said, put it in the development agreement. The caliper of the tree has to be stepped up.

Mr. Behar: We're good with that. I mean, I...

Commissioner Lago: That's all I ask.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, let's...

City Attorney Ramos: And I'll just say that there's a real public purpose to having shade trees.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Madam City...

City Attorney Ramos: It's better for the community to have them, and so (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The message has been delivered.

City Attorney Ramos: Why it's a very good public purpose.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And here's another thing also.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Madam City Attorney, will you tell us what we're voting on, and I need a motion.

City Attorney Ramos: We need a public hearing first, sir.

Commissioner Keon: Yeah, there's...

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: A public...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Anybody...

Commissioner Lago: And I think I...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Wishes to...

Commissioner Lago: I think the developer should be heard. I mean, he's been working on this for three years.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You're doing a great job. Don't say anything.

City Attorney Ramos: Mr. Clerk, can you swear Mr. Paper in?

City Clerk Foeman: Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the statements you're about to (INAUDIBLE)...

Henry Paper: I do. I do, thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Henry.

Mr. Paper: I have a number of comments that I'd like to make, but I want to reserve them for the second meeting, when we're done.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Mr. Paper: I do want to say that I'm honored, and I'm humbled by all the nice things you said, the compliments you gave me. But, in fairness, the compliments have to be shared between the private sector, our company, and the Commission and the City. This has been a collaboration from day one with unwavering support, Commissioner Keon and Commissioner Lago. You see the results of that on this plan today. This is something that is a product of mutual hard, honest work together. And we're all beneficiaries of that. And, the ultimate beneficiary is the citizens and the constituents of the City who have every reason to thank you for helping me produce this for the City.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Henry.

Mr. Paper: And I'll reserve for later on.

Commissioner Keon: Mayor Valdes-Fauli, I am -- I really -- I want to thank staff.

Mr. Paper: Oh, yes.

Commissioner Keon: Because I know -- I think it was three years ago now -- was it three years? -- when we were having -- you know, we had a discussion about, you know, the number of studies that have been done on the North Ponce area, and there were many, many, many studies that had all been accepted by the Commission, but they had never been acted on. And so, we took a look at all of the studies that had been done to date and, you know, along with staff, began to look at, you know, what were the common themes to every study that was done and there were so many that were many commonalities amongst all of those studies that were done. And said -- as a Commission, we said that, you know, maybe it's time now to act on all of those studies, and so, let's put a planning process in place...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: And we did. And, the staff really worked with us so well on that planning process. And, Ramon was so heavily involved in leading that planning process in the North Gables. And, the people in the community really -- much to my surprise -- really came out and participated and talked to us about it. And you know, as a result, with the overlay, you know, we have -- you know, we've dealt with Ponce. Now, we have the transition into, you know, the lower areas. We have the garden, the preservation piece. We have so many pieces now that have been put in place that will -- that should guide the redevelopment of this area. And, this is the first project that we are seeing under all of those overlays and whatever. So, I'm very -- I'm very excited to see it built, and that we can really see, you know, how effective were we. I mean,

we'll judge our effectiveness on the results and how they come in, and then how other things in the area develop, and that we can really maintain that -- the urban residential quality of that area and have different, you know, housing types from the old that we will preserve and they have the ability to transfer the development rights. So, you know, we will maintain a very -- mix of different housing types within that as an urban residential community that I think will become a very desirable place to live.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: So, thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Commissioner.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you very much.

City Attorney Ramos: I have an eComment that was submitted. I will read it for the record, from Mr. Brett Gillis. Strongly oppose the Regency project, as currently proposed. It is very alarming that this passed P&Z. North Ponce is our garden district. Calabria is the Ponce extension, should be max medium-rise, to me. This 12-story building does not have a human feeling. I take issue with Med bonus being granted for this design. Perhaps, site Lots 10 and 11 could be slightly higher if sufficient green space around site preserves a garden district vibe. We need elegant structure -- architecture. This is not our life -- this is our lives.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Will you call...

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will somebody make a motion...

Commissioner Keon: I'll make a motion.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: On J -- on F-6.

Commissioner Lago: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll, please?

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: F-7.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So move.

Commissioner Keon: Do you have to write it? Do you have to read F-7?

City Attorney Ramos: I read all three at the beginning.

Commissioner Keon: Oh, okay. So moved. I'm sorry, seconded.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: You're including the conditions, right?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Huh?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The conditions recommended by staff?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, yeah.

Commissioner Keon: Oh, okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll, please?

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: F-8.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So moved.

Commissioner Lago: Second it.

Commissioner Keon: With conditions.

Vice Mayor Quesada: With conditions.

Commissioner Keon: Call the roll.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

City Attorney Ramos: Mayor, will you officially close the public meeting as well, so when it comes back on second reading, we do not have another public hearing?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. The public hearing is closed. And now we have F-10, information only.

City Attorney Ramos: F-10 just rides along with the three ordinances and will be heard -- that's the site plan approval. It'll be heard at the next meeting when it comes on second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, good.