

1 roll, please.
 2 THE SECRETARY: Felix Pardo?
 3 MR. PARDO: Yes.
 4 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 5 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 6 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?
 7 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.
 8 THE SECRETARY: Sue Kawalerski?
 9 MS. KAWALERSKI: Yes.
 10 THE SECRETARY: Claudia -- I'm sorry, she left.
 11 Eibi Aizenstat?
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.
 13 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Thank you very much.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 15 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: We'll be back.
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: What I'd like to do is
 17 call an item that is on the agenda out of turn.
 18 I would like to have -- if it's okay with
 19 everybody on the Board, I'd like to call G-8.
 20 The City has asked for that item, if we could
 21 hear that first.
 22 MR. PARDO: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, which
 23 item --
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Item G-8.
 25 MR. PARDO: 8.

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1 MR. COLLER: Item G-8 --
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, please.
 3 MR. COLLER: -- an Ordinance of the City
 4 Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing
 5 for a text amendment to Article 2 "Zoning
 6 Districts," Section 2-405 "Residential Infill
 7 Regulations Overlay District (RIR)" of the City
 8 of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code to provide
 9 a maximum building length of three hundred feet
 10 for all properties seeking approval pursuant to
 11 the Residential Infill Regulations; providing
 12 for severability, repealer, codification, and
 13 an effective date.
 14 Item G-8, public hearing.
 15 MS. GARCIA: All right. Thank you.
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 17 MS. GARCIA: Jennifer Garcia, City Planner.
 18 This was continued from our last meeting,
 19 and if you could recall, but for the benefit of
 20 our new members, I'll just go ahead and explain
 21 what this is about.
 22 There is an area of our City, in the North
 23 Ponce area, that we allow Residential Infill
 24 Regulations, and that's giving an extra bonus,
 25 double the density, if you meet the criteria of

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1 the Residential Infill Regulations.

2 Now, we've discovered that some of the
 3 parcels get combined into a much larger parcel,
 4 and they're developing buildings that are more
 5 out of context with the existing urban fabric
 6 of the North Ponce neighborhood. So to try and
 7 fix that issue, we're proposing to limit the
 8 building frontage on any street to 300 feet,
 9 and that's -- again, this is -- I'm sorry, this
 10 is a sponsored text amendment from a
 11 Commissioner, and that's pretty much it.

12 So, after our discussion from our last
 13 meeting, the Board had requested to have an
 14 architect from the Board of Architects to come
 15 and explain different ways that we could
 16 accomplish it through architecture or if it's
 17 better if we discuss splitting the building or
 18 to space in between. So I brought, Judy, our
 19 Board of Architects Chair, actually, here to
 20 discuss this, any questions for her.

21 MS. CARTY: Yeah, I mean, I guess --

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Welcome. If you'd
 23 please state your name and address, for the
 24 record.

25 MS. CARTY: Sure. Judy Carty, 920 Medina

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1 Avenue.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

3 MS. CARTY: So, I mean, I think, at the end
 4 of the day, the question is whether it gets
 5 limited to 300 feet or not. That's really the
 6 primary question. And then the secondary is,
 7 there's multiple ways that that could be done,
 8 and is it a separation, a physical separation,
 9 that's required or can it be done in an
 10 architectural manner, right, within the actual
 11 building development itself.

12 I think that the answer is, yes, to all,
 13 right, in terms of possibilities, but probably,
 14 if the physical requirement of a separation is
 15 required, I think it may be more effective,
 16 only because from sitting on the Board, I
 17 feel -- and I'm speaking for myself, I think
 18 there are others on the Board, Glenn Pratt,
 19 who's in the audience, who may be more familiar
 20 with each of the nuances of the different
 21 areas, but I would say that probably we are all
 22 not as familiar, and what that means is, is
 23 that if we're not, if put it in the Zoning
 24 Code, it is much more quantifiable than leaving
 25 it to our discretion, but, you know, obviously,

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1 that's sort of up to this group to decide.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Does anybody -- before
3 I open it up for public comment, any quick
4 questions that you'd like to ask? If not, I'll
5 open it up for public comment.

6 MR. PARDO: I have a quick question, Mr.
7 Chairman.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, please.

9 MR. PARDO: So, Judy, in your opinion, is
10 300 feet really the -- from a massing
11 standpoint, because we're looking at it
12 horizontally, but if we're looking from a
13 massing standpoint, do you think 300 feet would
14 accommodate, you know, to reduce the massing
15 problem that exists in such an area, where you
16 have the infill area, where the streets are so
17 narrow, in both, the east and west and north
18 south corridor, or is this something that maybe
19 should be studied a little bit more indepth as
20 a whole at the BOA or a sub-committee of the
21 BOA to come up with a number or is this the
22 only number that was given to you by Planning?

23 MS. CARTY: So this was the only number
24 that was given to me. It's not something that
25 I've discussed with the rest of our board. I'm

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1 the nature of it, it becomes a large mass, and
2 I feel like, so maybe it's -- in addition to
3 the 300 feet, if that remains, maybe there's
4 other stipulations, in terms of setbacks that
5 have to occur, and maybe planting that needs to
6 happen in front of those types of elements, in
7 order to sort of nuance the requirements. So
8 that, yes, the development can take place, but
9 that it's more on a scale that we're looking
10 for.

11 MR. BEHAR: I've got a quick -- go ahead.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sue.

13 MS. KAWALERSKI: Yeah, I've got a few
14 questions, if you don't mind, please.

15 Are there any current buildings of that
16 length there at this point in time in that
17 neighborhood?

18 MS. GARCIA: No.

19 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. What --

20 MS. GARCIA: That are currently built, no.

21 MS. KAWALERSKI: That are currently built.
22 Currently, in the pipeline, to be built there?

23 MS. GARCIA: Yes.

24 MS. KAWALERSKI: Currently in the pipeline
25 to be built up to 300 or over 300 feet?

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1 sure there's, you know, varying opinions on
2 that. 300 feet is a considerable length,
3 right. So I think some of it, even within
4 that, will depend on the architecture and the
5 requirements, if we require a paseo or other
6 things, that cause it to be further broken up
7 from the 300 foot mass.

8 I mean, 300 foot, as a sheer wall, is, to
9 me, an issue. And one of the other things that
10 sort of gets discussed is, the setbacks and the
11 maximum height from like single-family
12 residential, and I think that's the danger in
13 that area, is that there is a fair amount of
14 very, you know, low properties, and so maybe a
15 more effective or an alternate to that would be
16 to stipulate, as well, you know, how high you
17 can go across the street from a single-family,
18 and then step further back, so that there are
19 more requirements that are put in place.

20 The thing I know that we deal with on the
21 board with larger properties is the loading
22 dock, FP&L vault, pump room, you know, switch
23 gear, and what that does, as a facade, on a
24 street, that you want as a pedestrian oriented
25 street, and it's just -- you know, because of

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1 MS. GARCIA: Over 300.

2 MS. KAWALERSKI: Over 300 feet in length.
3 (Simultaneous speaking.)

4 MS. KAWALERSKI: Is that what caused this
5 amendment?

6 MS. GARCIA: More or less, yes.

7 MS. KAWALERSKI: That's what's causing
8 this. So there's something already in the
9 pipeline that's over 300 feet in length and
10 that's why one of the Commissioners wants to
11 change that; is that correct?

12 MS. GARCIA: Yes.

13 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. Just to give me
14 some perspective, the Lifetime Building, how
15 long is that?

16 MS. GARCIA: I don't know off the top of my
17 head, but this is just the area that's in North
18 Ponce.

19 MS. KAWALERSKI: No, I know, but I'm just
20 trying to visualize how long 300 feet is, is
21 what I'm trying to say. Is it the Lifetime
22 Building, is it --

23 MS. GARCIA: It's normally half a block.

24 MR. PARDO: A football field.

25 MS. KAWALERSKI: A football field, okay.

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1 MR. PARDO: Goal line to goal line.
 2 MS. GARCIA: There you go.
 3 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. So is a football
 4 field larger or smaller than the Lifetime
 5 Building?
 6 MR. PARDO: I am not familiar enough to be
 7 able to calculate.
 8 MS. KAWALERSKI: I'm just saying that if
 9 300 feet is the Lifetime Building, and you're
 10 putting it into a neighborhood, that
 11 neighborhood, that's going to overwhelm the
 12 neighborhood. I totally agree with what you
 13 said.
 14 And, Judy, to your point, you're talking
 15 about total physical separation in the 300 foot
 16 length or physical separation for 300 and
 17 another 300 and another 300? What are you
 18 talking about, a total physical separation?
 19 MS. CARTY: Well, the initial point was, if
 20 you want to make it 300 feet, that you're
 21 limiting it to -- the question is, is it an
 22 architectural separation, like a setback, or
 23 does it have to be a physical non-connected
 24 separation, if you do have longer than 300
 25 feet, right, because -- and I think -- and,

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1 required. The landscape requirements of trees
 2 every, I want to say, 30 feet or so, the lush
 3 landscapes that are in the front, 20 percent of
 4 your landscape requirement has to be in the
 5 front yard, that all is -- all of this is in
 6 play. All this is doing is, basically just
 7 limiting the size of the building you can build
 8 on a building site within this area.
 9 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. Well, I would
 10 strongly suggest what Mr. Pardo has already
 11 suggested, that this be further discussed and
 12 -- I mean, we're changing the Zoning Code.
 13 This is just a simple, you know --
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sue, let's go ahead
 15 and open it --
 16 MR. BEHAR: Let's open it, because there's
 17 some of us that do have questions.
 18 MS. KAWALERSKI: Yeah. Sorry.
 19 MR. BEHAR: I have a question for Staff and
 20 Judy, maybe.
 21 Are there any single-family homes in that
 22 area?
 23 MS. GARCIA: There are not, no.
 24 MR. BEHAR: None?
 25 MS. GARCIA: Uh-huh.

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1 then, the question is, what is that separation,
 2 right, what is the size of it? Is it, you
 3 know, five feet, is it twenty feet, what is
 4 that separation requirement, which I think has
 5 to go along with the 300-foot discussion,
 6 right, if that's what you want to implement?
 7 MS. KAWALERSKI: Yes. Okay. So there are
 8 enough questions in my mind about this, and you
 9 brought up a whole lot more that I had not even
 10 thought of, where I think it deserves further
 11 discussion, and I agree with Mr. Pardo, that
 12 possibly the Board of Architects should take
 13 this up, and not only discuss the length of the
 14 building, but the setbacks, the step backs, et
 15 cetera, because 300 feet -- a 300-foot wall is
 16 not very attractive in that kind of
 17 neighborhood, correct?
 18 MS. CARTY: Right, exactly. I mean, that's
 19 the question, how do you nuance the development
 20 that, you know, is already in place to occur
 21 with the architectural elements that can soften
 22 that.
 23 MS. GARCIA: And just to clarify, all of
 24 the setbacks and the step backs that are
 25 required in this area of this City are still

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1 MR. BEHAR: Are the right-of-ways less than
 2 50 feet?
 3 MS. GARCIA: No, they're not.
 4 MR. BEHAR: They're not?
 5 MS. GARCIA: Most of them are 60, but --
 6 MS. CARTY: But let's clarify that, though.
 7 We're talking about only in the --
 8 MS. GARCIA: The North Ponce area.
 9 MR. BEHAR: Yeah, the North Ponce.
 10 MS. CARTY: Right, but there are --
 11 MS. GARCIA: So north of Downtown and
 12 between Douglas Road and Le Jeune to Eight
 13 Street.
 14 MR. BEHAR: It's from Zamora to Eighth
 15 Street, basically --
 16 MS. GARCIA: Correct.
 17 MR. BEHAR: -- from Le Jeune to Ponce,
 18 basically. That's the area.
 19 (Simultaneous speaking.)
 20 MS. GARCIA: Uh-huh.
 21 MR. BEHAR: So we do not have a street --
 22 MS. GARCIA: Our apartment district.
 23 MR. BEHAR: Apartment?
 24 MS. GARCIA: Yeah.
 25 MR. BEHAR: We don't have a right-of way of

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1 less than 50 feet and we don't --

2 MS. GARCIA: We have some that are 50 feet,
3 on the southern side, that are in Section K and
4 Section L, but most of them are 60 feet in the
5 Douglas Section.

6 MR. BEHAR: Correct.

7 And something else, this area was never
8 planned to have alleys at the rears of the
9 property? That will be ideal to locate the
10 FP&L vault and all of those back of house areas
11 that are necessary to do a development? This
12 is not -- this is somewhere unique.

13 I'll tell you, I just came back, literally
14 last Wednesday, and I had the opportunity to
15 visit three beautiful cities, London,
16 Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Madrid, I should
17 say, all there, and I took pictures of street
18 frontages of buildings are in excess of 300
19 feet.

20 And to answer your question, just to debate
21 for a second, the Lifetime Building, that
22 building is not a good comparison because that
23 building goes on for like 700 feet. So that
24 was one of those that, you know, it really
25 doesn't come, in my opinion, into the equation

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1 here.

2 But, again, going back to, I visited -- you
3 know, and a lot of the time, and I think, Judy,
4 you mentioned it, you could achieve by
5 architectural, you know, treatment how you're
6 going to separate it, not necessarily physical,
7 because that could create a hardship to a
8 property owner, if you have to, because now,
9 instead of playing with the architecture, you
10 have to introduce two buildings that may or not
11 may, at the end of the day, will be perceived,
12 you know, very similar, and what is that
13 separation? Unless you dig like a 60-foot
14 separation, you will still perceive that, from
15 the street view, as one building.

16 So I think there's multiple ways. Do we
17 have a clear -- and I'm going to go into your
18 comment. Do we have a clear solution? I don't
19 think we do. I think that, you know, limiting
20 to 300 feet in the Zoning Code is not the wise.
21 And I know that we have, you know, Glenn Pratt
22 here, and he's done a building, that I want to
23 say, that if I recall, are going to be 300 or
24 even maybe a little bit more than a 300,
25 there's ways to articulate that, to create that

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1 break, you know, continuous. That's my two
2 cents for today.

3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: What I'd like to do
4 is, before we continue, Jill, do we have any
5 public comment on this item?

6 THE SECRETARY: We have one speaker.

7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: That's what I meant.
8 Sorry, one speaker?

9 THE SECRETARY: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could you please call
11 their name?

12 Jim Dockerty.

13 (Inaudible.)

14 THE SECRETARY: Okay. So --

15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: What about Zoom?

16 THE SECRETARY: No.

17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Nobody on Zoom?

18 THE SECRETARY: No. No one's raised their
19 hand to --

20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Anybody on the phone
21 platform?

22 THE SECRETARY: No.

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Then, at this -- are
24 we good?

25 MS. CABRERA: Yes.

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1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Then I'd like
2 to go ahead and close it for public comment and
3 open it for discussion.

4 Felix, I'm going to start with you.

5 MR. PARDO: You know, I agree with Robert.
6 You know, exactly -- I've been in Copenhagen,
7 I've been -- you know, you're right, and most
8 of these areas have been developed -- the city
9 planning is completely different than our City
10 planning. In the North Gables area, which I
11 sat on a Blue Ribbon Committee many years ago,
12 to make sure that we didn't lose all of the
13 apartments in that area, one of the things --
14 one of the joys is walking or driving through
15 that area, where you have these street canopies
16 on these very small streets. Fifty feet is,
17 you know, pretty much -- it's not too small,
18 you know, when you have two-story apartments
19 that you have throughout that area, peppered
20 throughout, because then you have parallel
21 parking on both sides, which is every planner's
22 dream, right, and then you have enough area for
23 the tree canopy in the swales to be able to
24 create that softness that you have in that
25 area.

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1 I think that the reaction here is basically
2 that some of the proposed buildings that are
3 coming up are just so massive horizontally that
4 they overwhelm, and once you keep those two
5 parallel parking spaces on either side of that
6 small right-of-way and you include the
7 sidewalk, then, all of the sudden, it dwarfs
8 the originally intended planning use of that
9 area.

10 I think it should be reviewed. I'm not a
11 believer in taking away property rights from
12 developers in any way, shape or form, but I
13 think that this area and the size of the
14 buildings, as far as the massing is concerned,
15 really should be looked at. We have to be
16 careful that we don't canonize the scale of
17 these things, because when you have a
18 fifty-foot right-of-way, and you have these old
19 apartments in there, instead of being restored,
20 of course, they're disappearing, that's okay,
21 if it's part of it, but if you do all of it,
22 then it becomes a problem.

23 I think that most of the length issue is a
24 direct correlation of the total length of the
25 physical blocks that were plotted by George

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1 Merrick years ago. So if the block is 400
2 feet, and then you have the turn lot on either
3 end at fifty feet, will allow you to have 300
4 feet, and that's including the setback. So I
5 think that it has to be done in such a way that
6 you, Number One, allow the designer to come up
7 with the ability to be able to break up a
8 block, but also have the limitation, because
9 you will run into blocks where you're going way
10 beyond the 300 feet, and that becomes the
11 problem. Basically, it becomes a high-rise on
12 its side.

13 That's where I have the difficulty with,
14 and, obviously, you lose the scale. And this
15 is not a problem just here in our City. It was
16 a problem in the Art Deco area of Miami Beach,
17 where I own buildings. It's a problem in many
18 other places, where you're now substituting to
19 the next level, but the next level sometimes
20 has different hardships, and loading and
21 unloading becomes a problem, even in the
22 commercial areas, when you have that fifty-foot
23 right-of-way.

24 People are blocking the streets. Emergency
25 vehicles can't get through. I see it every

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1 day. My office is directly across the street
2 from the new police station. I have seen
3 officers, where they have to go through alleys,
4 just to be able to get out to Le Jeune to be
5 able to go south to be able to respond. It
6 becomes a problem when you have deliveries all
7 of the time, and it's just a choking effect.

8 So, Number One, I applaud the Planning
9 Director for bringing in Judy and having her
10 expertise and her experience on this. I think
11 that it's important that we look at not only
12 the length, but as Judy said, also the breaking
13 up of this, so they just don't become
14 monoliths.

15 I am not saying anything negative to the
16 pictures that Robert brought in. These areas
17 are absolutely beautiful, but, also, in these
18 areas, many of the times, you see these small
19 ancient roadways that had carts being pulled by
20 horses, and then, all of a sudden, they explode
21 into these open plaza area, which make part of
22 the senses that we feel that make it so
23 beautiful.

24 We don't have that luxury in the north --
25 in the North Gables Apartment District, but I

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1 understand that it's an infill area, the
2 densities is important, but I also understand
3 that there's a great reservation of what the
4 total length are, because not everyone can
5 design a very nice building that gets broken
6 up, where the massing doesn't become obtuse.

7 MS. CARTY: In your example, it was
8 Kensington, but that's -- they would love
9 Kensington, right, because it's only four or
10 five stories and it's broken up.

11 MR. BEHAR: It's not just Kensington.

12 MS. CARTY: And there's a stoop and tree
13 every 25 feet.

14 MR. BEHAR: But, Judy, six stories, and
15 this is not broken up. This is pretty much,
16 except for the little portico as an entrance,
17 is not broken up, but there's plenty of example
18 that I took -- and this, I was able to even go
19 to Google Earth, you know, to get a more
20 perspective of what you could do. I think
21 that, you know, it happens in every city that
22 is -- especially in the infill areas, that you
23 want that.

24 Something to keep in mind, Felix, is that
25 in addition to the fifty-foot right-of-way, you

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1 have a ten-foot setback. So that makes the
2 building 70 feet. And when it comes above the
3 45 feet, you step it back another 10 feet. So,
4 all of a sudden, you've 90 feet from face of
5 building to the potential face of building
6 across the street. I don't know about -- you
7 know, maybe Sue doesn't picture it, but 90 feet
8 is a long way, and we're not talking The
9 Lifetime Building.

10 I have the honor to see that building every
11 day. I sit on my windows and I see that
12 building in front of me, okay. And some of us
13 that sat on this Board -- and I don't know if
14 Mr. Salman was here at the time, we voted
15 against that project, just for the record,
16 okay.

17 But I think that -- in the infill area, I
18 think there's -- you know, we've got to be
19 careful of what we limit, you know, because I
20 would hate to have -- and the other thing is,
21 how many properties do we know that would
22 qualify to do such a project?

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Right.

24 MR. BEHAR: Not many.

25 MR. PARDO: You have to go back and do an

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1 commend you for bringing in the BOA, you know,
2 a very qualified person to discuss this, and I
3 truly believe that it should be maybe studied,
4 from a massing standpoint, a very simple
5 massing standpoint, a little bit more, with
6 some good ideas from the BOA, that it won't
7 infringe on developer rights, but at the same
8 time, will make it a better product at the end
9 of the day and better livable.

10 And the only thing, Robert, that I want to
11 remind you of is that when we visit over there
12 in Europe, everybody's walking, because they
13 have great mass transportation. The problem
14 is, out of these buildings, come all of the
15 required cars that are coming out. They choke
16 the streets, and, unfortunately, I have the
17 pleasure of having to hustle people out, for me
18 to come into my covered parking spot inside my
19 building, and I have to get people out, that
20 are blocking my driveway, because they're just
21 standing there, stopping, and, also, the
22 loading and unloading, which has become even a
23 worse situation, because there's no side area
24 for the trucks to get out of the way, only the
25 bays that are done --

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1 inventory of the size of the blocks, because
2 these ownerships aren't -- you know, they
3 haven't been accumulated yet necessarily. In
4 other words, you have to buy one lot, then the
5 other lot, then the other lot, then the other
6 lot, then you put it together.

7 I mean, this all goes back to the PAD, and
8 the PAD was used to be able to facilitate
9 innovation and design. We're talking about
10 many years ago, years ago, when Zeke and his
11 father were practicing land use here in this
12 City, and it was, take the shackles off, to be
13 able to come up with something better.

14 I don't necessarily think that everything
15 that's going up is better. I personally
16 believe that an inventory for the size of the
17 blocks is -- it should be -- it's more than
18 warranted at this time, because that area is
19 going to get filled up very, very soon, because
20 people are going to get bought out and people
21 are going to accumulate these things, and I
22 think that whomever the Commissioner was that
23 brought this up, you know, about the 300-foot
24 max, I think the intention was good. I think
25 it needs a little more study, but, you know, I

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1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Let's concentrate on
2 what we have before us right now, which is the
3 300 feet.

4 What I'd like to do is, Julio, I'd like to
5 get your comments on this, please.

6 MR. GRABIEL: I'm never worried about the
7 length of a building --

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you could turn on
9 your microphone. I don't think it's on.

10 MR. GRABIEL: Okay. I'm on.

11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

12 MR. GRABIEL: I'm never worried about the
13 length of a building. I think, if you have a
14 good architect and you've got supervision, you
15 can have a building that's 600 feet in length
16 and be a good building. It doesn't matter.

17 We have the kind of controls in this City
18 that the building could be a hundred, 300, even
19 bigger than 300. If 300 is the magic number,
20 we know that that's peculiar and not
21 necessarily a fixed amount of length, but
22 Robert was showing buildings that are longer
23 than 300 feet and they're beautiful.

24 If you go to England and you go to Bath,
25 some of those buildings are -- forget about 300

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1 feet, they're 10,000 feet in length, and
2 they're beautiful and people go there just to
3 see those buildings. So the 300 building --
4 300 feet, it's a number that we can begin to
5 work with, but we have the Board of Architects,
6 who will be looking at each project to make
7 sure that there's enough variation in the
8 facade, so that a building would look good, and
9 I don't have a problem whatsoever with it.

10 MS. KAWALERSKI: Mr. Chairman --

11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sue.

12 MS. KAWALERSKI: -- I have one question.
13 Compatibility. Where does compatibility play
14 into this? You were saying that there are no
15 buildings so far this length in this area. So
16 what are you comparing that to? I mean, would
17 a building right now -- a project coming in at
18 310 feet, is that compatible with the present
19 neighborhood?

20 MS. GARCIA: So the Commission approved
21 back in 2017 that the minimum lot width to have
22 these infill regulations be applied to would be
23 20,000 square feet. That itself is not
24 compatible, but that's adopted. So what the
25 Commission is trying to do right now is to

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1 this is --

2 MR. BEHAR: Because that's a blank facade
3 with just --

4 MS. CARTY: No, exactly. And, of course,
5 if you had Kesington in front of you, yeah, of
6 course.

7 MR. BEHAR: Okay.

8 MS. CARTY: Right. Then you could have the
9 tower behind it. It would be fine.

10 MR. BEHAR: You know, and, unfortunately,
11 you know --

12 MR. ARTY: Maybe it wouldn't. You might
13 disagree.

14 MR. BEHAR: If you do that, where you put
15 your parking behind those units, you're going
16 to conceal it and you're going to create a
17 streetscape that we're not going to compare it
18 to this. I mean, this is beautiful and we
19 cannot duplicate this. First of all, there's
20 no parking in those buildings, you know.

21 MS. CARTY: Right.

22 MR. BEHAR: So we don't have that challenge
23 that we have to do, us architects, but I think
24 there's ways to achieve it. That is horrible.
25 That's a terrible example.

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1 control how long those buildings are in
2 affecting the built environment. That's all
3 this is.

4 All other regulations, the step back, the
5 setbacks, the landscape, all apply. It's just
6 controlling the length and the effect on the
7 street and for the ground.

8 MS. CARTY: But, see, what I would say to
9 that is, yes, it complies, but what it creates
10 is things like, you know -- like this. I mean,
11 this is the City of Miami. This is the Zahar
12 (phonetic) Building, right, which is, as we all
13 know, brand new. To me, those requirements, in
14 a way, if we could change that and make it so
15 that this is set back, maybe there's more
16 landscape, you know, things that happen with --
17 so that these type of facades don't occur, may
18 be a better approach, and maybe the 300 feet
19 isn't as important as controlling other
20 elements a little bit stronger.

21 MR. BEHAR: Judy, let me ask your opinion.
22 If that example -- if that building had
23 units -- walk-up units on the street, would
24 that change the character of that building?

25 MS. CARTY: Well, I mean, all of this --

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1 MS. CARTY: Terrible, exactly.

2 MR. BEHAR: Okay. But if that facade had
3 walk-up units all along the facade, it will
4 completely change the character of that --

5 MR. PARDO: Liners.

6 MR. BEHAR: Yes.

7 MS. CARTY: I agree with you a hundred
8 percent. I mean, part of the problem with
9 larger buildings is, they need all of this,
10 right. You need a big FP&L vault. You need a
11 bigger switch gear. You need a loading dock.
12 So the question is, how do we temper that?
13 And, yeah, maybe it's -- there's a lot of ways
14 architecturally that it could be achieved.

15 MR. PARDO: Mr. Chairman --

16 MR. GRABIEL: I think, in the last few
17 years that I've been here, we have, as a Board,
18 insisted that no building becomes a blank wall
19 on the street, and the liners on the front.
20 And I remember being here and seeing parking
21 garages all of the way down to the ground.
22 That has not happened for years.

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: That is correct.

24 MR. GRABIEL: I think we have been pushing
25 for (A) to screen the parking garage

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1 completely, and (B) to make activity -- people
2 spaces all of the way down to the ground, so
3 when people walk by or drive by, they see that.

4 MS. GARCIA: Which is already a requirement
5 in the RIR. The parking has to be stepped back
6 30 feet from the property line, which gives you
7 a 20-foot -- at least a 20-foot liner.

8 MR. GRABIEL: I think we've become a little
9 bit more sophisticated than we were a few years
10 ago, where buildings would come down to the
11 ground with the parking garage open to the
12 streets. That should not be allowed anymore.

13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct. Correct.

14 MR. PARDO: Mr. Chairman, in my personal
15 opinion, I think that we need, Number One, the
16 Planning Department to really look at the
17 inventory of all of the area in this area
18 that's affected. That's my opinion. And,
19 therefore, you know, I think it would be
20 premature to approve or deny, you know, this
21 300-foot --

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I think we'd have to
23 see if there's a motion first, but I'd like to
24 speak before we get to that.

25 MR. PARDO: Okay. Yes, sir.

1 it's done.

2 What I am hearing is that we should have --
3 and the senses I'm hearing is that we should
4 have more discussion on this, but at the same
5 time, I would like to see a presentation, and
6 I'd like to see the presentation with massing,
7 what it may look like, and a presentation with,
8 when you go to break it up, what that would
9 look like, seeing it both ways.

10 I agree with Julio that I don't know if
11 it's necessarily the amount of linear feet that
12 will make a project good or bad. You can have
13 a project that's 200 liner feet, and it's
14 still, to me, and I'm not an architect, just
15 not pleasant to look at, and it doesn't feel
16 right in the neighborhood.

17 I also agree that we're looking at a very
18 specific area for this, and at the same time,
19 we have the Board of Architects, and every
20 project that comes before the City, first, as
21 this, does go before the Board of Architects,
22 and that's their responsibility. It's, the
23 Board of Architects is the first step, for them
24 to look at it and say, you know, this looks
25 right or this doesn't look right. So we have

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

2 A couple of things that I've noticed from
3 comments that were made. One is, when
4 Mr. Pardo went ahead and said we don't want to
5 take or taking away rights from developers,
6 it's actually from property owners. So they're
7 not necessarily developers, but we have to look
8 not to take away rights from actual property
9 owners.

10 What I, myself, would like to see is a
11 presentation, more so. Not necessarily because
12 you're going "X" amount of feet are you
13 creating a bad project. I agree with what
14 you're saying and Sue is also talking about it,
15 and even Robert and Julio, it depends how you
16 break up the project. If you put something
17 that's just a massing straight forward, I
18 agree, it's terrible, but if you break it up
19 correctly -- I've seen architects, within even
20 our City, that are here today, that have done
21 projects, where you walk by and the way it's
22 broken up, it looks good. I've seen projects
23 that are done in our City where you walk by the
24 project and it looks like a brick wall, and to
25 me, I don't like that, but I think it's how

1 to trust in that opinion of those people that
2 are in that place, to make sure that they're
3 doing their jobs.

4 Second is, we have Staff within the City
5 that also looks at it, and we have to rely upon
6 the Staff in the City, that they are doing also
7 their job.

8 And it's important to look at every project
9 individually, not group every project as this
10 is what it should be and this is not what it
11 should not be, and that's why we're here.
12 We're all here because we look at every single
13 project that comes before us as an individual
14 project. None of those look at a project and
15 say, "This is for everything." And, I think,
16 to me, it's wrong to define something that you
17 group together.

18 If you look at a project that looks good
19 and you agree with it, then that's how you
20 should look at it. That's just my two cents or
21 what I feel, and I do want to thank you for
22 taking the time and coming, and that is
23 important and it's well recognized.

24 MS. CARTY: We try at the board, I will
25 tell you, every week, to, you know, review it

1 in detail, every project, and we do exactly
2 what you say. Every project is individual.
3 Not everybody likes to hear that, but that is
4 how it's dealt with. So there is that.

5 I mean, from my perspective, having sat on
6 that board for a long time, the zoning laws
7 assist us with making sure that certain things
8 happen architecturally, and as you know, I
9 mean, there are good architects, there are bad
10 architects. Good architects is really easy.

11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Right.

12 MS. CARTY: And it's only a portion that
13 you're really struggling with anyway, but the
14 zoning helps that. So that's all I would say
15 is, the more defined -- what you do here
16 defines, the easier it is for us

17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, and I
18 agree.

19 Mr. Pardo.

20 MR. PARDO: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make
21 a motion, and before doing that, unless I
22 misunderstood, this was brought up by a
23 Commissioner, correct?

24 MS. GARCIA: Yes.

25 MR. PARDO: And I think the Commissioner

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1 is not that simple, doing massing, you know.
2 There's many ways to break up that massing. I
3 mean, I think some of us that do that, you
4 know, for a living, it's not that simple. It's
5 not a prescription.

6 MR. PARDO: And, Robert, you and I have
7 gone down the path and I don't want to do that.
8 I'm deferring to Staff, let them do what they
9 do, but what's here before us, I don't want to
10 deny. I simply want to defer it and let Staff
11 be able to come back with something.

12 MR. BEHAR: But then you've got to tell
13 Staff, okay, do a massing that is maximum of
14 300 feet or do a massing that could be, for
15 lack of a number, 600 feet, but it's broken up
16 into what appears to be two masses or
17 something, because I don't know -- and
18 Ms. Garcia, you know, this has been put on you,
19 okay, on your department. This is a lot of
20 work. And I'm sure you're going to get help
21 from the whole Board, but this is a lot of work
22 and I don't know -- and maybe we should bring
23 up, you know, Mr. Pratt to say a word,
24 because --

25 MR. PARDO: Like I said --

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1 should be -- I don't know who it is -- they
2 should be applauded for trying to do something
3 about a situation that they're perceiving, and
4 I understand that, but I would feel more
5 comfortable, at this point, to make a motion to
6 defer this item, because it's complex and it
7 needs a little more work, and -- to be able to
8 get the results that I think the Commissioner
9 was looking for originally.

10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: When you say to go
11 ahead and defer, defer and come back with?

12 MR. PARDO: I would not want to deny it.
13 What I want to do is defer it, because maybe
14 whatever they come up with will be different,
15 where -- as far as the amendment to the Code
16 and that's why it's before us.

17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: But what are you
18 looking -- are you looking for a presentation,
19 are you looking for some massing --

20 MR. PARDO: Yes, of course.

21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: That's what I want --

22 MR. PARDO: Deferring for a study, to be
23 able to come back before this Board.

24 MR. BEHAR: But you need to be very clear,
25 because that's a big task for them to do. This

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1 MR. BEHAR: You know, listen, I called you
2 up to the stand.

3 MR. PARDO: Pratt, you're near the door.
4 Make the exit.

5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Let the record show
6 that Mr. Pratt was called. Mr. Pratt, did you
7 stand before to be sworn to speak?

8 MR. PRATT: Yes, I did.

9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

10 MR. PRATT: Glen Pratt, Bellin, Pratt,
11 Fuentes Architects, 301 Almeria, Suite 210.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

13 MR. COLLER: Could you just pick up the
14 mike, because you're a little tall?

15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Just a little tall.

16 MR. PRATT: How's that?

17 No, it's been interesting listening to the
18 comments, and I think that all of the
19 discussion is very, very good. I think that
20 there are -- to Robert's point, I think -- and
21 to Felix's point, I think that there's a lot of
22 nuances in each individual site, and I think
23 that, you know, it depends on the lot depth.
24 One of the things that is -- we always find in
25 trying to figure out the puzzle of the design

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1 is the parking, and one of the things that is
2 really, to me, or at least what I find always
3 is the difficult -- most difficult part is that
4 the lot depth is just insufficient for setting
5 up any kind of parking bay that works well and
6 that has any type of very efficient set-up.

7 And what happens is that because of the
8 insufficient lot depth, you wind up with having
9 the parking becoming very irregular, and, you
10 know, we wind up using auto lifts and other
11 means to try and satisfy the parking, and so
12 that's really one of the main things that I've
13 always found is one of the most problematic
14 things, it's essentially the depth of the lot.

15 The lots in the north -- especially in the
16 North Gables area, generally they're only a
17 hundred or sometimes a hundred and ten feet,
18 and by the time you get done with subtracting
19 out the thirty-foot setback for the parking on
20 the ground on the levels that you're not
21 permitted to have that on the front elevation,
22 it just really creates a very difficult
23 situation to try and resolve, and so that, you
24 know, because of the inefficiency of the
25 parking, the pedestal, the parking area becomes

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1 much, much larger, because they just can't be
2 compressed.

3 So there's a number of things that, I
4 think, it would be good to study and to see if,
5 you know, some of these dimensions that were
6 chosen or, you know, put into the Code for the
7 design architects to utilize, you know, maybe
8 that might even be a part of the study, too,
9 that I would suggest.

10 I do agree with Mr. Grabiell. I think that
11 part of the -- the whole thing comes down to
12 how good the architect is and how good the
13 design is, and I think that if you have a good
14 architect, hopefully you wind up with a good
15 design and somebody that recognizes the need
16 for, you know, creating the massing in such a
17 way that begins to break it down to a more
18 urban scale.

19 So that's, I guess, all I would really say
20 on the subject.

21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you very much
22 for your input.

23 MR. PRATT: Thank you very much. It's a
24 very good discussion.

25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

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1 Sue.

2 MS. KAWALERSKI: It sounds like, if there's
3 a development in the pipeline that is 300 feet
4 or more, Jennifer, if that's what you said, if
5 there's an imminent application, that could
6 certainly be a test of what can be done and
7 what it's going to look like.

8 MS. GARCIA: There's not an active
9 application that's over 300 feet right now.

10 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay.

11 MS. GARCIA: This is a reaction to a past
12 approved project.

13 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. All right.

14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We should also -- I
15 just want to point out, we need to look at each
16 project individually, not do as a knee jerk
17 reaction because there's a project in the
18 pipeline or something that's working, because
19 when that project comes before us, that's when
20 we make our comments and that's when we look at
21 those projects, whether they're worthy or not.

22 MS. KAWALERSKI: And that's what I was
23 referring to.

24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Felix, we have
25 a motion.

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1 MR. PARDO: I tried to make a motion --

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Please.

3 MR. PARDO: -- to defer the item and let
4 Staff come back, at the appropriate time --

5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: With a presentation?

6 MR. PARDO: -- with their recommendation
7 and proposal.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Jennifer, did
9 you get a sense of what the Board is looking
10 for?

11 MS. GARCIA: Yeah, I think so.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. We have a
13 motion. Is there a second?

14 MR. BEHAR: I'll second it.

15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a second by
16 Robert.

17 Any discussion?

18 MR. COLLIER: Are we doing this to a date
19 uncertain, because we don't know when this is
20 going to come back?

21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yeah, I think it
22 should be uncertain.

23 MR. BEHAR: This is a lot of work, and I
24 don't foresee a date certain any time soon.

25 MR. COLLIER: Now, let me just say one

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1 thing, just because -- this is a Commissioner's
2 proposal. The other alternative is to
3 communicate to the Commissioner that you think
4 that the project -- that this needs more study,
5 because right now what's happening is, the
6 Board is holding up -- and I don't know what
7 the time sensitivity from -- of this item is.

8 And the other option is to communicate to
9 the Commission, on this item, that this item
10 needs to be deferred for further study and for
11 Staff to make a presentation, so that the Board
12 is aware of what -- excuse me, not the Board,
13 the Commission is aware of, you know, what this
14 Board is struggling with.

15 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Collier, at the end of the
16 day, we are a recommendation to the Commission.
17 They could take it upon themselves and pass
18 this item without our recommendation.

19 MR. COLLIER: Well, I think they wait for
20 your recommendation, but -- they do wait for
21 it. I mean, there's two ways to go. You could
22 just defer it, date uncertain, and let Staff
23 handle it or you communicate to the Board that
24 your recommendation on this item is that it
25 should be deferred and that the Commission

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1 It's two different ways to go with this.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Felix, which is your
3 motion?

4 MR. PARDO: I would think -- you know, I
5 feel comfortable this way, because Staff will
6 explain and a Commissioner could watch, you
7 know, the conversation of this particular item.
8 This is not easy, but I think this is the way
9 to do it. I would be sickened if the
10 Commission said, "Well, we're just going to
11 adopt the 300 feet." That would be wrong, and
12 I don't think -- I don't care which one of the
13 Commissioners it is, I don't think that's their
14 intent.

15 Their intent -- and I said, their intent
16 was to correct. It was trying to reply to
17 something that is an issue in their mind, the
18 perception, and we've discussed it, I think, at
19 length, and I feel comfortable just deferring
20 it here and asking Staff to come back, so they
21 have something better to provide to the
22 Commission to review and consider.

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Is that clear?

24 MR. COLLIER: Yeah.

25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And, Robert, you're

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1 should defer it and allow Staff for appropriate
2 study. I think that would be the other
3 alternative.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I was going to say,
5 that sounded like that was part of Felix's
6 motion.

7 MR. PARDO: I think that was it, that they
8 would study it and come back, and I think Staff
9 can then, you know, explain to the Commission
10 what this conversation was about.

11 MR. COLLIER: So it really -- you're not
12 actually deferring it from this Board. You're
13 making a recommendation to the Commission, on
14 this item, that it should be deferred for
15 further study.

16 There's two ways to go. One is, like we
17 did here, it was never seen by the Commission
18 and you're deferring it at this Board level.
19 The other option is, you're communicating,
20 through your action, that you're recommending
21 to the Board (sic) that the item should be
22 deferred for further study. I know it sounds
23 like the same thing --

24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: To the Commission.

25 MR. COLLIER: To the Commission, right.

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1 good with the second?

2 MR. BEHAR: I'll take that friendly
3 amendment.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any other comments?
5 No? Call the roll, please.

6 THE SECRETARY: Felix Pardo?

7 MR. PARDO: Yes.

8 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

9 MR. BEHAR: Yes.

10 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?

11 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Sue Kawalerski?

13 MS. KAWALERSKI: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?

15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.

16 Thank you very much.

17 Now we're going to go back to the agenda in
18 the regular order. We have G-1.

19 Mr. Collier, if you'd please read that into
20 the record.

21 MR. COLLIER: Item G-1, an Ordinance of the
22 City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida,
23 providing for text amendments to the City of
24 Coral Gables Official Zoning Code pursuant to
25 Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section

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