

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items F-7 and F-8
November 9, 2022
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Development Services Director, Suramy Cabrera

Public Works Director, Hermes Diaz

Public Speaker(s)

George Navarro

Raymond Fort

Agenda Items F-7 and F-8 [10:20 a.m.]

F-7: A Resolution of the City Commission approving Remote Parking and Conditional Use review pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process" Section 14-203, "Conditional Uses," for proposed Remote Parking associated with the Mixed-Use project referred to as "4311 Ponce" on the property legally described as Lots 36 through 43, Block 5, "Industrial Section" (4311 and 4225 Ponce de Leon Boulevard), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date.

F-8: A Resolution of the City Commission approving Mixed-Use Site Plan and Conditional Use review pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process" Section 14-203, "Conditional Uses," for a proposed Mixed-Use project referred to as "4311 Ponce" on the property legally described as Lots 36 through 43, Block 5, "Industrial Section" (4311 and 4225 Ponce de Leon Boulevard), Coral Gables, Florida;

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including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date.

Mayor Lago: I'd like to take items F-7 and F-8.

City Attorney Ramos: Yes Mayor – F-7 and F-8, I will read them both into the record. With your permission we should consolidate the public hearing. Mr. Clerk, you will need to swear in anybody in that's going to be testifying on this item. F-7 is a Resolution of the City Commission approving Remote Parking and Conditional Use review pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process" Section 14-203, "Conditional Uses," for proposed Remote Parking associated with the Mixed-Use project referred to as "4311 Ponce" on the property legally described as Lots 36 through 43, Block 5, "Industrial Section" (4311 and 4225 Ponce de Leon Boulevard), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. And F-8 is Resolution of the City Commission approving Mixed-Use Site Plan and Conditional Use review pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process" Section 14-203, "Conditional Uses," for a proposed Mixed-Use project referred to as "4311 Ponce" on the property legally described as Lots 36 through 43, Block 5, "Industrial Section" (4311 and 4225 Ponce de Leon Boulevard), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Those appearing on this item, please stand and raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you'll provide today will be the truth and nothing but the truth.

All: Yes.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Good morning.

Mr. Navarro: Good morning Mr. Mayor, Commissioners, George Navarro with offices at 333 S.E. 2nd Avenue. We are very excited to be here this morning. With me are my clients, Jose Buchetto and Eduardo Otaola, along with Ray Fort from Arquitectonica who is the project architect, who has been working on this project. This project sits in a very premiere and prominent corner of your Village of Merrick Park. Its right at the intersection of San Lorenzo and Ponce de Leon Boulevard. This is an area of the city that over the years has experienced tremendous residential growth, to compliment the large regional mall that serves as the anchor for this. But one of the components that has been underserved in this market has been office, and we are excited to be presenting the first-Class A office building in the Village of Merrick Park that's been proposed in the last 20 years. And this is a part of the city that from a marketability perspective, you have international and national corporations looking to move to; and the reason is, you have all the amenities there, it's a very walkable area, you have the residential, you have the retail, so its an area that attracts large corporations, and we believe its going to be a very successful project. Its going to be a very beautiful project, and its going to complete this very important intersection. I'll let Ray walk you through the project, but just at a high level we are proposing 60,000 square feet of office space.

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We have ground floor retail for showroom space, and at the upper level, we have some residential units, as well as some flex space that in the future can be converted to restaurant. It's an area that has attracted a lot of premiere dining establishments and we want to continue that trend. One of the things that we are also very proud of, I think this is the first project to come in and take advantage of the remote parking. When this Commission adopted remote parking last year, the idea was to try to use some of the parking spaces that are operating under capacity in the area, and to work to provide off-site spaces in order to reduce the building mass and try to reduce the massing of the parking pedestal. And as Ray will show you, we have been able to accomplish here, we are proposing to provide approximately 83 spaces on site and we're proposing to lease 123 spaces in an off-site garage within the Village of Merrick Park. This project has gone through multiple levels of review. We were before your Parking Advisory Board last month and we had a unanimous recommendation of approval from them. We've also gone before your Board of Architects, who also unanimously recommended approval of this project and granted the Mediterranean Bonuses for it; and a few months back we were at your Planning Advisory Board, which I'm happy to report also unanimously recommended approval of this project. Before Ray walks you through the plans, some of the things from a public benefit perspective that we are proposing and that we've been working with your City Manager on. We've committed to repave the intersection of San Lorenzo and Ponce in front of our project. We are proposing \$50,000, approximately \$50,000 in contribution, sorry, in improvements to Ponce in terms of landscaping and pavers, and in addition to all that, we are also making \$125,000 monetary contributions of public benefit for future improvements within the Village of Merrick Park/Ponce corridor. So, we are very happy to be proffering that. And with that, I'll let Ray walk you through the project.

Mr. Navarro: We are pulling up the plans right now.

Mayor Lago: While we wait for the plans, can you give me a little bit of background. I was reading, I was looking at the plans this weekend, and I noticed that there are some residential units that are in the building. Can you give me a little bit of understanding of why are we incorporating that into, obviously the code; the code plays into it, but I want to put it on the record and I want to get an understanding from staff, because you're building a commercial building on Ponce.

Mr. Navarro: Correct.

Mayor Lago: And I want to understand a little bit more.

Mr. Navarro: So the code has, that's a great question, the code has certain percentages that are required to be provided for a mixed-use project; you can have up to 85 percent office, minimum of 8 percent retail. There is always a gap that has to be filled. We are filling that with this residential component. The reason that we've incorporated here is because we are anticipating there's going to be a location for international business and an international bank that is interested in leasing here. They have a lot of senior VPs that come in for a few days to stay, and we want to have that as an additional amenity for the office building, but one of the technical reasons that we are providing is because of the mixed-use percentages in your code.

Mayor Lago: Let me ask you a quick question, and again, I don't want to get involved in your business plan, its your business. But if you go look, for example, the Bacardi Building on Sunset, had dinner there last night with a client, you can go upstairs to the rooftop, which is something beautiful, inviting, great setting. You can have events with families, to have Baptisms, to have brunch, they just incorporated probably one of the most beautiful technologically advanced trellis system with glass. It protects you; you are in the elements; you can be outside enjoying the beautiful weather here in Miami and not be sweating. That building is a LEED Platinum building. I thought, especially in that area, Merrick Park, you would want to have that kind of outdoor dining feel, with a beautiful opportunity to get up. By the way, I remember, I don't even know if I approved it or not, was the previous project that was approved here.

Mr. Navarro: Correct. The old Rony Mateu Building.

Mayor Lago: With all due respect to the architect, I think this is a much nicer, more beautiful project. I think its also smaller in size, is that correct?

Mr. Navarro: Correct. Yes.

Mayor Lago: In height – smaller.

Mr. Navarro: Yes, because we've been able to take advantage of the remote parking.

Mayor Lago: So, I just want to kind of understand that, because to me, I'm a little bit perplexed why you would have three residential units instead of having something, to me, I think would be a lot more appealing. If somebody wants to have a nice restaurant experience, kind of like what Bellini is in the Grove, overlooking our beautiful city. We could have something like that.

Mr. Navarro: And I'll have Ray walk you through the roof plan, if you could put it up.

Mayor Lago: I just found that interesting, because this is like one of the last remaining pieces of beautiful property. You are actually building a much smaller building in height that you could build, and I thought it would be something exceptional to have on a rooftop opportunity.

Mr. Navarro: We think that that location is prime for that. We've actually designed the rooftop in order to be able to be converted into a restaurant use with rooftop dining. In the event that we get interest, we think we will; the city even in the last round of Michelin ranking, the city had several restaurants that received acclamations for it, so we have actually designed the rooftop to be able to convert it to provide that in the event we get a restaurateur.

Mayor Lago: You are thinking about that.

Mr. Navarro: We are.

Mayor Lago: But you have to get city approval.

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Mr. Navarro: Currently, what we would have to do, and obviously with your Planning Department's confirmation, I think what we would need to do is, in the event that we do convert that area into restaurant, obviously it changes the parking requirements, we would have to lease additional parking spaces in order to accommodate that use, but I think right now we've designed it that way. We haven't obviously explored the market, so what we are showing right now are the three units and, if you can see it there on the screen, it's a flex space that either going to be for restaurant or amenity space for the residential units. But I think we are required to keep a percentage of our project as residential in order to comply with the percentages in your Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Anderson: Sometimes the percentages don't make sense, not necessarily with residential, but sometimes we require retail on ground floor areas where its vacant for a decade and the restrictions. So, I hate to handcuff too much to a situation where we end up with vacancies just sitting there. Its not good for the streetscape, its not going to encourage pedestrian traffic if you have a vacant storefront. I'd like to hear more about – I understand you have a particular client that this may benefit.

Mr. Navarro: Correct. In this case it may work, but I know I can tell you in other projects that we've worked on that gap percentage between, when you add 85 percent and the 8 percent, that gap that you have to fill in is really people either put We Work spaces or they try to get creative, but its something that's always been talked about, but I don't think there's been a change in that policy in the Comprehensive Plan that will require a city initiated text amendment to your Comp Plan in order to provide some more flexibility.

Commissioner Anderson: We are handcuffed right now, right.

Mr. Navarro: Correct. Yes.

Mr. Navarro: With that, I'll let Ray walk you through the project.

Mr. Fort: Hi, my name is Ray Fort with Arquitectonica. George, thank for the intro. You explained it well, in terms of its positioning. What we are proposing, but I think it would be good just to clarify the site's location and how design-wise we've essentially tried to make sure we position all the programming correctly with respect to its urban context. So, the site's located towards the south end of Ponce de Leon, and it sits at this stepped intersection of San Lorenzo that essentially becomes on the west side, the entrance to Merrick Park, and on the south side of the site, it's the access to one of the remote parking locations. So, we designed the building to essentially have great access to Merrick Park and also access to the parking garage to the south. These are some images of the existing street conditions, and the current site has a couple of single-story commercial buildings and a surface parking lot. So proposed program of ground floor retail and showroom space and office above is a much more active use and will make this area much more lively. These area a couple of aerial images of the site. Its highlighted here in yellow. You can see contextually there are a number of buildings that are multi-storied around it, so what we're

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proposing, and I'll show you in a later massing is contextually consistent with what's in the area. The remote parking garage that we plan on using is directly south, as I'd mentioned, but there are a number of other locations that we could potentially use. It should also be noted that this property sits at the edge of the City of Miami, so directly east of the site on Orange Street is not within Coral Gables, but we understand that there may be a connection, a very direct connection from the Metrorail Station to Merrick Park and that we want to reenforce that connection there. The site is about 20,000 square feet: 200 feet long, and about 100 feet deep. North is now to the right of the page and to the top the page is Ponce de Leon which is in the direction of Merrick Park. So on the ground floor, we're utilizing an existing curb-cut as the main drop-off to the site and access to the garage along the north edge. In blue is the office lobby and in the pink color is the showroom and retail. We've placed all the garage access in ramping and loading areas to 39th Avenue, which is used more as like an alley street nowadays. So trying to activate frontages where we have activation and putting back-of-house on the back-of-house streets. The parking garage is really as efficient as we can get it for a site like this. It's a flat level parking, so long term it in theory, could be converted into something, but right now its surface parking. It's a very efficient parking garage and we have two levels. The typical office floor is also very flexible in design and it can be divided into four tenant spaces, a single tenant space or a number of more, but the idea is that having this rectangular four-plate with a center core, gives long term flexibility to the building. We are also proposing a small break in the building where there's an inset terrace that I'm highlighting the cursor over right now, and there's a lot of demand for outdoor space when it comes to office space these days, so providing some areas of outdoor terraces, not to all the offices, is very desirable and especially on level four, which is the first level that steps back from the podium height will be able to have additional outdoor space, in addition to the rooftop that we were just discussing previously. The rooftop is planned to have that flexibility that it could potentially be a restaurant, but we also have the three residential units that are intended to serve a particular tenant. Above that, we have rooftop mechanical area that will be screened; and this is a section of the project that shows the different heights of the building and how we step-back in compliance with the setbacks. Something to note, this is the office, its of a Class A level. We are proposing 14 feet floor to floor; and the mechanical area, as I described earlier would also be screened. So getting into some of the massing images. There's some of the same views we saw earlier with the site located in it. You can see the building in this gray color is of the same scale of its neighboring projects. There's a couple of views of that. You have Merrick Park on the lower righthand side of the screen here. Looking at elevation of the project. We are complying with the Med-2 standards and we're proposing a podium that is associated with the lower floors, and then the building steps back on level 4 to become more of a vertical proportion and we have these double height-style windows with a spandrel type of panel that creates the look of these taller windows throughout the project. This is the inset terrace that I'd mentioned earlier; and we're also proposing a trellis to cover a portion of the rooftop terrace so in the event that it did become a more active space, we can easily convert that into something that works well for a restaurant or other active uses. This is a rendering standing from Ponce de Leon, looking towards the east. Its essentially as though you were walking out of Merrick Park, and you reached Ponce de Leon. You can see the podium of the building, which is clad in littick stone; and we are proposing aluminum extrusions that have a wood-like look to it, to screen the garage from visibility from the street. On the upper floors, we have a white scored stucco that has box-framed windows that highlight those double height conditions and vertical

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proportions with Mediterranean style, and then the terraces, I previously mentioned. But the whole idea behind the design of the project is that we want to make sure that at the street level it feels like a pedestrian scale building and then we step back and then from there we have the office building above. The drop-off includes that paseo that runs from Orange Street from Metrorail through to Merrick Park and San Lorenzo; and you can see the drop-off has an ample apron so that we know a lot of these nowadays with the use of transit that we want to provide ample space to gather the car, have a waiting area to be safe from other cars that are coming in and out of the site. And this is a night view taken from Ponce looking down the other San Lorenzo to the south of the site. On the right side of the page here is one of the remote parking locations, so its very conveniently located on the same side of Ponce de Leon with access to the lobby along that side as well. We are proposing up-lighting for the upper floors to give the building this sort of glow that emanates from the area that you will not see the light source and on the lower floors, we are proposing some sconces that highlight very specifically the pedestrian level and making sure that this is not a dark area at night and its safe to walk around. That's the presentation. I'll be glad to answer any questions anyone has.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think it's a beautiful building. I think its nicely done. I think that this area is really prime for some improvement on that side of the street that's why we had adjusted the zoning and made some accommodations several years ago, and I think this is what we are looking for. To the Mayor's point, I understand his point, but I'm happy to hear that you have the flexibility so that if you have that opportunity, you can do it, and if not, I also can appreciate that there are businesses that are looking for that kind of sort of corporate apartment/housing situation. We have a lot of people in our business that come in from out of town, have to rent hotels or whatever, you know there's a real cost to that, and having that as an amenity for executives that maybe are not, maybe are transient, maybe they are in New York and her part-time or whatever. I can understand that that's an amenity for a certain type of business, but I'm glad to hear you have the flexibility so that you could do something like what the Mayor was suggesting would be great there as well. And I think this is going to be, overall, I think as we see this corridor across the street kind of develop, I think its going to be great for Merrick Park. I think that you have already, sort of that core in that area, and then you have basically a bunch of warehouses and other sort of things in this area, it makes a lot of sense to kind of build around that mall. If I worked in that building it would be great, you could cross the street, maybe you could sneak off to a movie during lunch or something. No – but there is a convenience factor to that, people want those kinds of amenities there. Kudos to you guys. Great job. I think you stuck within what we have as a Comp Plan and everything. Obviously, if we want to make adjustments to that, we can talk about that separately, but I think this was in line with what we are looking for here overall, and I think the design is beautiful, I really do.

Mayor Lago: Just to put it on the record. There was a previously designed building that was proposed for this. This is less project in nature. By the way, this comes before the Commission, as required by the code, because this is a mixed-use project. I don't think there is anything outside, right, that I'm missing. Is there anything outside the code in regards to this building?

Development Services Director Cabrera: We'll be presenting next.

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Mayor Lago: Okay. I'm sorry. I think the building is beautiful. Its beautiful and I don't mean to get involved in your business. I just see such an opportunity with the Underline, with Merrick Park, you have the trolley right there, which runs up and down the spine now six days a week and hopefully now seven days forthcoming. Again, this is an opportunity to take advantage of an area, like the Vice Mayor said, which has been kind of neglected for a long time.

Mr. Navarro: You are going to have a lot more foot traffic, the employees are going to have a great work life balance. In talking to your Development Services Director, there's actually some more flexibility for us to be able to convert some of these residential units into additional restaurant space, which will give us more flexibility to attract top-notch operator here. In speaking with her further, I think we do have that flexibility to provide some more rooftop dining areas, if that's something that the Commission is interested in. We could definitely explore it and move forward that way.

Vice Mayor Mena: And hopefully before you're done with your building, you'll have a state-of-the-art dog park down the street as part of the Underline.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Hopefully.

Mr. Navarro: Yes, two of them in the area.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes. That would be a good amenity as well.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes, it would be. I'm concerned about the streetscape in that area and the walkability, so when staff presents, I guess we can talk more about that.

Mayor Lago: You want to hear from staff next?

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Mr. Navarro: And we're here to answer any questions.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. Ms. Cabrera, good morning.

Development Services Director Cabrera: Good morning, Suramy Cabrera, Development Services Director. I'll be presenting because our City Planner just called in that she had an emergency and couldn't come in today, so bear with me. Do you have the presentation, Billy? So, this is a conditional use for a mixed-use site plan and conditional use for the remote parking. Next slide. This is the location. As was mentioned, its on the corner of San Lorenzo and Ponce. This is an aerial shot of the location and a street view of the location of the proposed project. There are two requests, the mixed-use site plan for conditional use and the remote parking. Its over 20,000 square

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feet, so that's why its here in front of you today. The mixed-use site plan includes the showroom on the ground floor, a paseo, office lobby, loading area, and the right-of-way improvements. So these are the requirements for the mixed-use. The lot area is 20,000; the proposed is 20,000; the open space requirement is 10 percent; they are at 13 percent. The density is unlimited. They are proposing three units. The height could go up to 120 feet with Commission approval, because its an industrial district, they are proposing 109 feet. The FAR max is 3.5, they're at 3.48, and the parking, they are meeting with some onsite parking, 81 spaces, and then the rest will be remote parking. They'll also be a payment-in-lieu of 25 percent. These are the areas – this shows where they are going to be doing the remote parking, the transit. Also, all the areas around there are MX2, just as this is MX2, so its very appropriate for the location. The review timeline is that it went to DRC; everything happened this year. In March of this year, the Board of Architects in May, the neighborhood meeting was held in June, the Planning and Zoning Board saw it in October, and its in front of you today with City Commission. The letters went out to all the residents, businesses, which within 1,000 feet. Public notification happened three times for the neighborhood meeting, the Planning and Zoning and City Commission, once for each. Three times the property was posted; once for DRC; once for BOA, and once for Planning and Zoning Board. Its been on the website four times again, for DRC, BOA, Planning and Zoning, and today for Commission and two newspaper advertisements. So the staff's determination is that this application is consistent with the Comp Plan goals, objectives and policies. The staff recommendation is that the mixed-use, request number one, the mixed-use be approved with conditions and that the remote parking, second request be approved with conditions. And the conditions are, I think that the one most known is the \$125,000 contribution which is, there it is, number two, off-site public realm improvement contribution of \$125,000 for Ponce de Leon Boulevard streetscape within the design innovation district, that an addition to what they were showing on their site plan for improvements, which – could you put that back up. They are proposing some improvements on Ponce and in that corner, in the right-of-way, and then there's also the \$125,000 contribution for other improvements in that area.

Mayor Lago: So quick question in regard to landscaping, maybe this is a question for Deena. It looks to me like shade trees are being proposed for Ponce. Take into note, the size of the trees that are being shown on the rendering. I want to make sure that we get that size tree. I want to put it on the record. You are showing it on the rendering, I want to make sure it's the same tree that we get when the project is delivered. Too many developments come, show these beautiful renderings and then you go back, and the tree is a toothpick. It takes 15 years to grow. Please, make sure we galvanize that, we record it, make sure that's delivered. That's number one. Number two, my understanding is that this developer has an adjacent property and that they are also in consideration in the process of getting their development in order. I want to try to minimize the amount of small art projects that we have. I'd like to see that we have a roadmap where those two projects can be joined together. They're, I think half a block away from each other, so that we can put together one significant work of art in the other proposed project where there is more room for people to enjoy the work.

Mr. Navarro: Mr. Mayor, yes. We've committed to that. We have a condition that allows us to move the Art in Public Places contribution from this project and combine it with our project so

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that we can have a real world-class signature art piece. At the request of your City Attorney, what we are going to be doing is, putting that money into escrow before building permit and then we'll make sure when the other project get entitled and moves forward, we'll go ahead and combine those Art in Public Places fees to really do something special for this area.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Good. I don't have any further comments, unless my colleagues have something they'd like to put on the record.

Vice Mayor Mena: Did you say something?

Commissioner Anderson: I have a few questions. I like the design and my main concern is that we take care of some of this landscaping. I've got your landscape design up here. I see you have a nice ride share drop-off location, which that solves a lot of problems, but when people walk across the street to go back and forth between the parking, you look at the landscaping underneath those trees, its just going to be mud-splashing all over them and stuff. Staff has addressed this part of the conditions of approval. I talked about the landscaping on Ponce itself. Is there anything to do on San Lorenzo as a route to the parking garage itself?

Development Services Director Cabrera: In the street or in – because they are doing improvements on San Lorenzo also in the right-of-way.

Commissioner Anderson: Both sides?

Development Services Director Cabrera: Across from San Lorenzo, on the south.

Commissioner Anderson: There's existing trees, but there's like no under-planting. Its all roots.

Mr. Navarro: So, one of the things there, I think we're limited by the sidewalk widths, but we do, we are planning on enhancing the planters in that area. We have a lot more space on the Ponce frontage, but we are planning on also, as part of our development after we do that completing the sidewalk and installing additional landscaping, but we have to kind of fit within the ADA requirements of making sure we could get the minimum clearance there.

Development Services Director Cabrera: I think she's talking about the south side of San Lorenzo.

Commissioner Anderson: I'm talking about the south side of San Lorenzo. So your tenants go from beautifully landscaped median on the north side of San Lorenzo and then they get across the street and as they are walking to get to the parking garage you have mud.

Mr. Navarro: I think the Mayor has been working with the operator of the Village of Merrick Park for them to enhance their landscaping, and I think they are in the process of that. If you see some of the plans have been ripped out along Ponce. I think the mall operator...

Commissioner Anderson: Yes, these are on San Lorenzo.

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Mr. Navarro: So, on the south side of San Lorenzo that's the parking garage that we're looking to lease spaces at, that's actually operated by the Village of Merrick Park, and I think they are in the process of enhancing the landscaping in that area. I think they've had some trees that need to be replaced and I think they are in the process of replacing them.

Commissioner Anderson: That would be...

Development Services Director Cabrera: That is part of what they are working on with Merrick Park.

Vice Mayor Mena: Are the mature trees currently on the north side of San Lorenzo there?

Commissioner Anderson: They are on both sides.

Vice Mayor Mena: But I'm asking, there's pretty mature trees on the north side of San Lorenzo, are you going to be able to retain those, or are you going to have to...

Commissioner Anderson: No, they're remaining on the north side.

Vice Mayor Mena: I'm talking about on the south side.

Commissioner Anderson: Those are all Black Olives.

Mr. Navarro: Those trees are going to remain; the three trees on the...

Vice Mayor Mena: Outside – in between San Lorenzo and the building.

Mr. Navarro: Correct. So the ones on our side are going to remain. Yes, we are going to protect them during construction and obviously, improve the sidewalk after we are done, and then bring that landscaping kind of like at the ground level, enhance it, but those trees are going to remain. We are not planning to remove them.

Commissioner Anderson: Right. The ones that are being removed are some palms and they are going to be replaced with shade trees, because I did look at that.

Mr. Navarro: Yes, we have some palms on Ponce, they are going to be replaced with shade trees.

Commissioner Anderson: I think I believe, and I just want to make sure its in there that you have a valet service requirement in the conditions of approval.

Mr. Navarro: Yes, we do. We need to submit a valet operations plan to Public Works before that goes into operation.

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Commissioner Anderson: Okay. And the street improvements – there’s a yield sign down there near the circle and we have the situation over here on Segovia and Coral Way, not actually Coral Way, but it was near where the Segovia Tower is. You’re turning, it’s a dangerous place to cross, it is a yield, there is a crosswalk there, but I’d like staff to look at what we can do to enhance it, so its more visible for people that are walking there. If you’ve ever walked that, you need to do something; and then the trolley stop cover, we need as well, would help this building. The executives, I’m sure wouldn’t want to be standing out in the rain to use the trolley. Can we see a design at some point.

Public Works Director Diaz: Certainly.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay. And for the \$125,000 that they are contributing, is that going to be going into some of these items?

Public Works Director Diaz: No. My understanding is that there are different projects around that area that have contributed at different times and I think what we’ll be discussing with the Planning Department...from Bird all the way down, you’ve got those palms...that’s what we’re...

Development Services Director Cabrera: To improve all that.

Public Works Director Diaz: Over what we are currently considering additional plans at the moment. We are trying to figure out how much money we have available and what can we get from there.

Mayor Lago: It would be nice to have some shade.

Commissioner Anderson: It would be nice to have some shade, so perhaps we can establish a landing date to have further discussion on that and make it happen.

Public Works Director Diaz: Absolutely.

Mayor Lago: Get an idea of what the budget would be so if we have to start working on matching it or putting additional funds into the budget for next year that we can get a head-start on that.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right. So we’re working with Planning and figuring out how much money, I think there are like two or three developers that have put money towards overall improvements in that area.

Vice Mayor Mena: So you’re talking about, just so I’m clear. I’m on Google Maps here, kind of just looking. You’re talking about as you go north on Ponce from this building to Bird Road.

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

Vice Mayor Mena: All of the palm trees?

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Public Works Director Diaz: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Removing them?

Public Works Director Diaz: No. We're looking at a project whether – they want shade and the palm trees need to go. At a minimum, there's some issues with those tree grates; the trees are going to have to be replaced, whether the preference is to keep the palms or put something shady. I'm sure that the discussion we'll have with this body.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think when you're doing a project from scratch, I'm all for and I prefer shade trees. I'm just saying, you have, I don't know how many there are, but there must be, I don't know, 60 or 70 palm trees probably between the two sides.

Public Works Director Diaz: There is no project at the moment – we're trying to figure out how much money is available and then at that point we can come back here.

Vice Mayor Mena: I just think we should have a discussion about prioritizing all the things that could happen in this corridor, and whether ripping out existing palm trees to put shade trees is the best use of funds or not. I get that typically, we have a choice between shade trees – I get it, I'm for that, but you already have a pretty mature palm tree corridor here and I think there's a lot – Like if you look at like the sidewalks and a lot of the other stuff, there's a lot you could do to beautify what's already there.

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct. Yes, absolutely.

Commissioner Anderson: The only comment I have about the Royal Palms on the sidewalk area is, one of those fawns drop, its huge, those are huge. In the center of the street, no problem. On the sidewalk, it's a mess.

Mayor Lago: I think it's a conversation that we can have.

Vice Mayor Mena: It's a maintenance issue, I think more than anything.

Commissioner Anderson: But it's a beautiful building. I think you've done a fabulous job with it. Looking forward to see some more LEED compliance information on the drawings.

City Attorney Ramos: Mr. Navarro, there was one condition that didn't make it to the papers. Do you want to go ahead and put that on the record now?

Mr. Navarro: One of the conditions that we wanted to just clarify was that when we come in with the parking lease for the off-site parking, that it be either a lease or a similar instrument that's approved by your City Attorney. I think that the idea is that we may have either a license or an easement that will have the same requirements as a lease would. It just may be in a different type

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of document. We want to make sure that we have that flexibility. Obviously, subject that its approved by your City Attorney as to legal form and sufficiency.

Vice Mayor Mena: I don't have a problem with that.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner.

Commissioner Menendez: Before we move forward, this is more for the administration. Since I'm sure this is perhaps one of other projects will be coming down the pipeline, the east side of Ponce and we will have more, you know, people crossing Ponce to get to Village of Merrick Park. I think we need to look at that entire corridor, take a look at it again, because I drive down that area a lot and its challenging for pedestrians. I'm looking at the image that the Vice Mayor put up. When you're coming from the large circle going north, where the traffic light is, you turn left into San Lorenzo. That's a spot where Ponce sorts of jogs left all of a sudden, the lines go and it jogs left. Fifty percent of the cars end up crossing over, because they don't expect, they don't know how to maneuver that jog left. That's exactly, I believe where people will be crossing the street, trying to get to Merrick Park. We have the crosswalks. We also have the trolley stop right where the crosswalks are. So when you're driving north on Ponce, you see someone waiting for the trolley, but you don't know if that person is trying to cross the crosswalk or waiting for the trolley. I've seen people assume that cars are going to stop, and they cross, and there is confusion. So, I think going forward, since the project, I think is amazing, the design and everything my colleagues have mentioned, I agree with. But for purposes of going forward in safety and just common sense, we need to look at that corridor to see how we can make it better, safer, and more practical.

Vice Mayor Mena: You also have diagonal parking along Ponce there. I've personally seen more than one car accident in real time. The reality is when you have diagonal parking on a busy street like Ponce between Bird and U.S.-1 there, when cars are moving fairly fast, people are backing out onto oncoming traffic; and when you are backing out from a diagonal parking space onto Ponce, you can't see. You have to like edge back. Its dangerous.

Commissioner Anderson: Unless you have a camera and even then its very hard, because of rain, the glare, you just can't see. Mr. Menendez, you describe perfectly the problem with that circle in the crosswalk area. I have walked it, you know, and you take your life in your hands trying to cross over that area. The cars come whipping around that circle too fast and if we had some kind of lit up system, whether the yield sign goes up or like they do on Coral Way, I think that would be greatly beneficial.

Vice Mayor Mena: And that's the point I was really making is, and I'll make this last comment so we can move on, because its not really specifically about your building, its more for staff, but I think as we look to invest funds in the infrastructure along this corridor, to me, the replacement of the palm trees for shade trees is lower on the list than a lot of the things being discussed, the crosswalks, the parking and some of these configurations that I'd like to see us improve to make it prettier, but also safer.

Mayor Lago: Perfect. Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: Understood Vice Mayor. The issue of that on-parking versus angle versus parallel parking is the loss of parking, as you know.

Vice Mayor Mena: I get it. I get it.

Mayor Lago: That's the same thing...

City Manager Iglesias: There's a lot of things we need to manage.

Mayor Lago: We dealt with that on Miracle Mile. Again, I'm with you in regards to the trees and finding a real solution, not just piece-mealing it. Let's look at it more holistically.

City Manager Iglesias: We will look at those issues, Mayor.

Mayor Lago: We have two time certain items. You have any other comments in regards to this item.

Vice Mayor Mena: I was going to make a motion.

City Attorney Ramos: Mr. Clerk, are there any public comments.

City Clerk Urquia: No ma'am.

City Attorney Ramos: We need two different votes.

Vice Mayor Mena: I'll make a motion on F-7.

Commissioner Anderson: Second.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes

Commissioner Menendez: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Lago: Before we move onto F-8, I want to make sure I made those comments about the rooftop. I want staff to work, if that is an option for the future, I don't want to get involved in your business, but I could see something like this really working out well for you, if you're interested in that.

Mr. Navarro: Yes, if we could have that additional flexibility that would be fantastic.

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Mayor Lago: Just work with the City Manager and his office. Moving onto F-8, do we have a motion.

Commissioner Anderson: I'll move it.

Vice Mayor Mena: I'll second.

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes

Commissioner Menendez: Yes

Commissioner Anderson: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mr. Navarro: Thank you very much.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Mr. Navarro: Enjoy the rest of your meeting.