

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes of Meeting, November 1, 2007
War Memorial Youth Center, Conference Room

MEMBERS	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	APPOINTED BY
Barbara Katzen	P	P	P	P	-	E	P	-	-	P	E	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick II
Jack Elmore	P	P	P	P	-	P	E	-	-	P	E	P	William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Maricris Longo	P	E	A	P	-	P	P	-	-	P	P	P	Vice-Mayor Maria Anderson
George Blet	P	P	P	P	-	P	P	-	-	P	P	P	Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Linda Lawrence	-	-	-	-	-	E	-	-	-	E	P	P	Wayne "Chip" Withers
Joanna Lombard	P	P	P	P	-	P	P	-	-	P	P	E	Board-As-A-Whole
Robert Parsley	P	E	P	E	-	E	P	-	-	P	E	P	David Brown

A = Absent

P = Present

E = Excused

STAFF:

Daniel Keys, Public Service Director

GUESTS:

Donna Box, President, Coral Gables Garden Club

Alberto Delgado, Public Works Director

RECORDING SECRETARY: Janet Carrasquillo, Public Service

Vice-Chairman, George Blet, opened the meeting at 9:17 a.m. and the roll was taken. A motion was made to "Approve the minutes from the October 4, 2007 meeting." The motion was seconded, voted upon and adopted unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE MASTER PLAN: Dan Keys reported that the streetscape plan North of Zamora Avenue which includes using the existing planting areas rather than creating bump-outs will be adhered to in most cases. Provision can still be made for good root growth in this type of situation. Bump-out planters are still the norm South of Zamora.

George Blet asked if the 3D Google Earth idea had been considered. Dan Keys replied that he is not sure if based on the available technology to date this will be possible to implement. He spoke with the IT Department and they are looking into what might work best.

Maricris Longo asked if a process had been set up for small projects to contribute monies toward future landscaping. Dan Keys stated that he and Alberto Delgado are working on developing a

program for this purpose.

Dan Keys reported that a current streetscape projects map has not been created as yet. As this relates to using the map to make suggestions for projects to be undertaken by the Greening of the Gables program, and the projects that are already planned by them will take six months to a year to complete, he felt that there would be ample time to create the map for that purpose.

WEBSITE CONTENT: Dan Keys stated he would email the edited information he had on the Ponce de Leon Blvd. project to members. Regarding the Frank Button article, he received a photocopy of the article, but it was not very clear. He is trying to see if a clearer copy is available. When found, it will be posted on the City website under Historical Landscape information. Asked what the article was about, Mr. Keys stated that it was like a sales pitch for Coral Gables, kind of a snapshot in history of the beginnings of our City's landscaping ethic.

Maricris Longo asked if the City website could be tracked so that it could be determined whether the work applied to different aspects of the website was worth the effort and money that goes into it. Dan stated he would get an answer from the IT Department.

GREENING OF THE GABLES: Dan Keys reported that the City Commission had authorized the Coral Gables Community Foundations' Greening of the Gables project to go ahead with the planting of Date palms in the median of Alhambra Circle. The Commission had also been advised that the Alhambra Rambla idea would be discussed at the November 1, 2007, meeting of the Landscape Beautification Advisory Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

PRESENTATION OF ALHAMBRA CIRCLE LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS: Alberto Delgado, Public Works Director, gave the board a brief history of the projects in the downtown area beginning in 1997, stating that after Miracle Mile was improved with a median, the focus was turned to Alhambra Circle in 1999. At that time, merchants and the City Commission approved of the Albert Perez plan, but costs were very high, so the project did not go forward. The Charrette was undertaken in 2001 and it included the Alhambra Rambla, but there was no plan for implementing it, nor had an in depth study of it been made. Focus has now returned to Miracle Mile for improvements. Due to these facts, it is felt that allowing the Greening of the Gables committee to plant palms in the Alhambra Circle median would be a good way to begin beautification efforts.

The issues involved with creating a Rambla were discussed. A 100' wide median could be created if all parking was removed and all but one of the travel lanes in each direction were removed. This would involve a significant mindset change regarding parking and vehicular movement issues. Mr. Keys commented that there does not yet seem to be a sufficient desire for the type of space that would be created if a Rambla was installed in order to overcome these other issues.

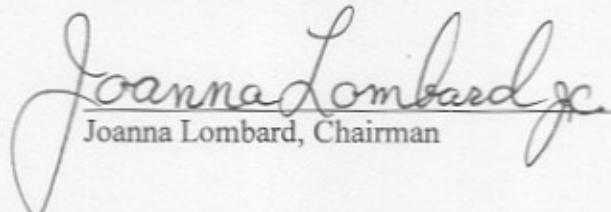
George Blet asked Alberto Delgado what is being planned for Ponce Circle Park. Mr. Delgado reported that the developer of the Old Spanish Village is paying for the creation of bump-outs with landscaping and crosswalks around the park. This will improve pedestrian access to the park. Plans for changing the park would follow in the future.

BOARD ITEM/CITY COMMISSION UPDATE: Reported under Greening of the Gables

CITY PROJECTS UPDATE: Dan Keys noted that the City is building a senior housing unit on Andalusia Avenue. Impact on streetscape is going to be developed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

APPROVED:



Joanna Lombard, Chairman

ATTEST:



Daniel Keys, Secretary

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2007, 11:00 a.m.
Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Road
Coral Gables, FL, Classroom B