

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item E-3 and E-4 are related
March 11, 2014
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason

Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.

Commissioner Pat Keon

Commissioner Vince Lago

Commissioner Frank Quesada

City Staff

City Manager, Patrick Salerno

City Attorney, Craig E. Leen

City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman

Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Zeke Guilford, Attorney representing the Developer

Armando Codina, Developer, Codina CG LLC

George Volsky, Coral Gables Resident

E-3 and E-4 are related [Start: 10:02:50 a.m.]

E-3: Receipt of Transfer Development Rights (TDRs). An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, requesting receipt of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review", Division 10, "Transfer of Development Rights", Section 3-1006, "Review and approval of use of TDRs on receiver sites", for the receipt and use of TDRs for the mixed use project referred to as "2020 Salzedo Street), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for severability, repealer, codification, and an effective date. (Passed on First Reading February 25, 2014).

E-4: Resolution. Mixed Use Site Plan Review. A Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting mixed use site plan review

pursuant to Zoning Code Article 4, “Zoning Districts”, Division 2, “Overlay and Special Purpose Districts”, Section 4-201, “Mixed Use District (MXD)”, for the construction of a mixed use project referred to as “2020 Salzedo Street” on the property legally described as Lots 13-37 and the east 7’ of lot 38, Block 18, Section K (2020 Salzedo Street), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for an effective date.

Mayor Cason: Agenda Items E-3 and E-4 are related. E-3 is an Ordinance which is in connection receipt of Transfer Development Rights. City Attorney would you please read the title of Agenda Item E-3.

City Attorney Leen: Thank you Mr. Mayor. If I may, I’m going to read Items E-3 and E-4, and then we will have a public hearing as to both and then separate votes as to each item. Item E-3 is a Receipt of Transfer Development Rights (TDRs). An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, requesting receipt of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, “Development Review”, Division 10, “Transfer of Development Rights”, Section 3-1006, “Review and approval of use of TDRs on receiver sites”, for the receipt and use of TDRs for the mixed use project referred to as “2020 Salzedo Street), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for severability, repealer, codification, and an effective date. This was passed on First Reading February 25, 2014. In addition, Item E-4 is Resolution – Mixed Use Site Plan Review. A Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, requesting mixed use site plan review pursuant to Zoning Code Article 4, “Zoning Districts”, Division 2, “Overlay and Special Purpose Districts”, Section 4-201, “Mixed Use District (MXD)”, for the construction of a mixed use project referred to as “2020 Salzedo Street” on the property legally described as Lots 13-37 and the east 7’ of lot 38, Block 18, Section K (2020 Salzedo Street), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for an effective date.

Mayor Cason: OK. Item E-3 is a public hearing, anybody has a speaker card?- if not we’ll close the public portion. Discussion?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: No.

Mayor Cason: Do I have a motion on E-3?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I’ll make a motion on E-3.

Mayor Cason: Vice Mayor makes the motion – second?

Commissioner Lago: Second the motion.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Lago seconds it.

City Clerk

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Cason: Any discussion on Item E-4.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I'd like to hear their presentation and maybe have a couple of questions on it.

Mr. Guilford: Good morning Mr. Mayor, Commissioners, for the record my name is Zeke Guilford with law offices at 400 University Drive. It gives me great pleasure to be here representing Codina CG LLC, the owner of property at 2020 Salzedo Street. We are here today as you know for a mixed use site plan approval. Here with me this morning is Mr. Armando Codina, Mr. Andy Burman, Larry Cohen, the architect from BC Architects, and Mr. Richard Garcia our traffic engineer. I'd just like to take a moment and kind of orient you to the site and maybe Andrew, you can kind of point. The property itself is currently vacant, it actually fronts Salzedo Street with Minorca to the south and Navarre to the north and that's important because basically we are at the edge of the CBD (Central Business District) which is on Navarre, so it goes from commercial to residential, the north; and then what we did is obviously to the south is commercial as well. The property itself is 1.6 acres, approximately 72,000 square feet in size; it has a master plan designation of high-rise intensity commercial which allows this development to be developed without any variances. What I'd like to do at this time is have Mr. Codina come forward; say a couple of words and then what I'd like to do is walk you through the site plan.

Mr. Codina: 2020 Salzedo is a unique site, because of the size and because it has no alley...

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Codina, I'm sorry, could we swear you in?- it's just for the record, is it OK that we swear you in?- you must take an oath. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Mr. Clerk would you do the....

City Clerk Foeman: Would you raise your right hand please. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will provide would be the truth and nothing but the truth?

Mr. Codina: Yes sir.

City Attorney Leen: Thank you Mr. Codina.

Mr. Codina: So 2020 says special property because of the size and because it has no alley. All of you know, Vice Mayor especially you know the history of George Merrick. A lot of the City was platted with 25 foot lots and an alley in the back that makes it impossible to build a quality institutional building. There are only three of those parcels that I know of available in the Central Business District today. The old Allen Morris piece that has been subsequently bought, the public piece on LeJeune that would also, and this piece, those are the only three left. So the only way to do something of the sort would be to do an assembly which is highly unlikely today. The last three buildings that have been done without an alley are three buildings that I did; I did with the City of Coral Gables, Gables Grand in front of Café Abracci that was a great success, we set a different tone for rentals in Coral Gables and it was a problem asset for the City of Coral Gables at the time. You have had three failed developers; in fact the only Commissioner that voted against me was Kerdyk Sr.

(Laughter)

Mr. Codina: We did that without the alley, we also did 355 and we did the Bacardi Building. So George Cohen used to own this property and I began chatting with him in the late 90's about selling it to me and George hardly ever sold anything. One day he called me and told me I have an offer, a very good offer for the property and I would prefer to sell to you, come and see me I'll show you the contract. So I went over to his office, looked at the contract and said, George you have to sell it, it was a big, big price. Subsequent to that there were two other owners, the property was permitted for a hotel and rentals 199 units and about 15,000 feet of retail, and you can see it there on the left. It was literally Chinese wall on all three sides, lower than what we are proposing because of our design which I'd like to share with you, so the property was being foreclosed by Wachovia, from the people who wanted to develop the hotel. They wanted to do this E-5 Visa financing, so we stepped in and offered to buy the property subject to giving him time to see if he could put his plan together. We bought in October of 2012, no '11, '11, January '11; we bought it the EV5 Visa didn't work out for those guys, so we kept the property. In October of '12, we bought an additional piece behind it, the City had expressed a desire that we replace the meters that we were taking away, and the Manager didn't just want the income. For instance, at 355 we would write a check for the meters that we took. It was told that they prefer

because of the buildings in front of it that we'd replace the parking that we didn't just take it. So the reason that you haven't had anyone come forward is that we met with the neighbors and we have complied with all of the things you will see in my site plan that we are providing more spaces than we are taking away and we are providing it outside of the building, so that we don't inconvenience our adjacent property owners. So you can see the little building on the left is the building that we are going to occupy and the tower would be a rental. This is very similar by the way to what we did when we built the Bacardi Building, when we did a smaller building so we used the FAR on the other side. In particular, I want to point out to you that we are particularly pleased with what we are doing on the ground floor. So I don't think there is a building in Coral Gables that has anywhere near the numbers that I'm going to provide you with. We are putting a courtyard right in Salzedo that is almost 9,000 feet. To give you an idea Books and Books is 40 by 40 so that's 1,600, this would be 9,000. This is a....that will connect block to block, that paseo is 2,000 feet, and then we are doing a colonnade all the way around, so that's 9,000, so this building we have 20,000 feet of open space that hasn't been done in the Gables. We have split the parking even though the offices are on the commercial side as it should be. The entrance to the parking is only 42 spaces is on the residential side, and the entrance to the residential tower, so we have tried to be very respectful of how to do it sensitively. The last item that I'd like to mention to you, I know Commissioner Quesada you get frustrated by the rules in Coral Gables, so this is the first building, I think, that we are going to....instead the mechanicals in the building. They will not be seen and we are going to trellis it. So it's a special way that we are doing the...[inaudible]...the highest point. This is inset with the mechanicals and from any building the only thing you are going to see is....space. So we think this is a unique building, we are going to have a little bank on the floor, that's the view of what would be the pool deck, so you will not see anything other than....so happy to answer any questions. This would be my last home.

Mayor Cason: What do you have envisioned for your courtyard?- what do you plan to...is it going to be open?

Mr. Codina: Open except – similar to Books and Books so at midnight or whenever a restaurant...open all day long, that's what it looks like.

Commissioner Lago: So you have a plan to activate that courtyard as you can tell obviously by the diagram you are putting forth. I think it's a great idea.

Mr. Codina: In fact, we have been toying with the idea of projecting...here, being able to project images, so if the Historical Society is having an event and would like to have cocktails there, they can flash on the wall....they are going to have a water fisher and above that a place to say yes. The idea that's where my office is going to be, we have a restaurant adjacent to, so the restaurant will be here....

Commissioner Lago: Like you were mentioning before, Commissioner Quesada's concerns in reference to roof structures and the aesthetic value of that. Being in construction and design, I know that additional cost that are associated with what you are putting forth, and obviously the mechanical; hiding the mechanical features either through some sort of screening or through the roof slope that you are using right now. Obviously, I would prefer this mechanism, which what you are using than using screening because you can always see the actual screen process, so it's something that added cost, but it's added benefit to the residents, so I appreciate the fact that you took that into account.

Commissioner Keon: I have a question with regard to the parking that you are replacing; you said the entrance into that surface parking is off of Navarre, is that right?

Mr. Codina: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: That will remain metered parking as opposed to permit parking?- will that remain metered parking Mr. Manager?

Mr. Codina: This parking will be private for us and this little piece is the....

Commissioner Keon: That's the metered parking off of Minorca, but did we lose street parking on Navarre or no?- we lost street parking on which street?- Minorca?

Mr. Codina: The City has chosen to....

Mr. Guilford: Commissioner Keon actually due to the streetscape master plan you lose parking all the way around...

City Manager Salerno: The southern edge of the property.

Commissioner Keon: Pardon me?

City Manager Salerno: The southern...

Mr. Guilford: Basically around – you lose parking but that's because we have to comply with the City's master plan and streetscape plan and when I actually did the presentation for the...in 2002. What we find is along Minorca both of those office buildings do not have parking or adequate parking.

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mr. Guilford: With the City Manager, the idea was he doesn't have to do the master landscaping plan, but let's put the parking in so really the people across the street have adequate parking for their visitors, guests, etc.

Commissioner Keon: But does that remain metered parking or is that permanent parking?

City Manager Salerno: Metered.

Commissioner Keon: It will remain metered parking...

City Manager Salerno: Yes.

Commissioner Keon:....and you won't sell permits, so it's available for metered parking.

City Manager Salerno: The intent is to substitute it for the loss that...

Commissioner Keon: For the loss that was there. OK. You know Navarre has a problem too with, it's a residential area, but there isn't any – it's for visitors or guests or whatever, some of those small places have they are all on-street parking too.

Commissioner Quesada: But the majority of the traffic going to be coming through Minorca, correct?

Mr. Guilford: Actually what we did is...

Commissioner Keon: It's not, I'm sorry, it wasn't the issue of the parking, the traffic coming through, it was the issue of the existing parking that is there in use by the residential community.

Mr. Guilford: There is nothing that we can do with that, about that because of the apartments to comply....now what I think to answer your question, Commissioner Quesada and to go back where the aerial was. What we did is intentionally because Minorca is the commercial side, we put the office building located next to the commercial and what we did is we put the residential next to the resident, but because we were trying to be considerate of the residents, the parking garage had become in and off of Minorca and the back of the houses on Minorca so that the residential side is not feeling the impact of the development.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes, I saw that on the design. I also saw the minutes of the meeting for the P&Z Board. I guess you mentioned at the public meeting there was neighbor that the biggest complaint was traffic, but after they heard the full presentation they no longer had the complaints.

Mr. Guilford: We have 43 parking spaces that are going out to Minorca which is going to take care of the ground floor tenants and some of the offices, but everybody else is coming in off of Minorca.

Commissioner Quesada: OK. Another question for you. I noticed on the P&Z Board meeting, Mr. Grabiell, he mentions and I noticed it also on the resolution a condition to eliminate the planters that are between the sidewalk and the arcade. Can you show me what was being discussed there?- and what was removed?- because again we just saw the final design.

Mr. Codina: They were initially there because of Code requirements...

Commissioner Quesada: OK.

Mr. Codina:...so we deleted that.

Commissioner Quesada: There were planters the entire way?

Mr. Guilford: Between the sidewalk and the arcade.

Mr. Codina:...[inaudible – off mic]...

Commissioner Quesada: OK, that makes sense.

Mr. Codina: We leave that up to the City, we are happy to leave them....

Commissioner Lago: I think it actually looks even better without the planters, more walking space, more area for people to actually enjoy the street.

Mr. Codina: [Inaudible – off mic]

Mayor Cason: You've given any thought to what you are going to do with art in public places?

Mr. Codina: We are – I was practicing placing art in great buildings long before it was an ordinance. I did Museum Tower in Flagler and we placed a Mona Lisa when we opened and you

have a sculpture....when I was building the Museum Tower I had Richard Haas the famous....it looks like a three dimensional wall in the building. When the building was finished we took the wall down and donated it to the University of Miami and it became like a sea wall at the University of Miami. We just built a million dollar sculpture that was not required at the City of Doral for....which is the County because we think it enhances our property. So we are looking at a number of things of how we are going to treat the walls. We have given a stipend to some artist to come with ideas and we are going to do a sculpture here in the middle of the building and I'll treat the entrance to those buildings, we are going to do something, I hate to use this term because I'm not a huge fan and it's not that, it's an art deco kind of a piece. How would you describe it....[inaudible]...It used to be what was done in the great buildings in Coral Gables and in Miami Beach, and we are going to do that at the entrance. The artist that we are talking to is an artist that just finished doing some work at Fairchild Tropical Garden. So we are talking to two or three different people on what we are going to do. Even if there hadn't been an ordinance, I would have been doing something, so we are paying a lot of attention to what we are going to do with that.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Just a quick question. I guess for Zeke or I guess Mr. Codina can answer it. The roundabout is going to be placed on the corner of Minorca?- right, I think we all received a lot of e-mails regarding a roundabout on Navarre too, but it's not necessary.

Mr. Guilford: Not only our traffic consultant but the City's traffic consultant looked at it on Minorca because the garage is there is bringing additional to the level of service goes from C to E. So it was the City's consultant that said listen, you need a traffic calming device there for the circle, whereas at Navarre they did not see, there was no change of level of service to warrant a traffic circle.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I've got to tell you from just a perspective of knowing that area very well, those parking spaces are really needed for those office buildings that are across the street, so that was a very good thought process to put them in there, because initially the George, I think was the name of it, eliminated all those parking spaces; and I've got to tell you, we the City Commission at that time up-zoned that from 8 stories to 16 stories, and I think you made the presentation on that. So when Mr. Codina bought, actually the people before bought it that was already zoned, so this is as-of-right. I will tell you that from the Commission prospective, if you do that ever up-zone something and you want to keep it, if you want to bring it back down, if the site plan is not developed and you need to put a reverter clause in there to revert it back down; but let me tell you this is so far a better project than what was going to be built with Mr. Goldbloom that I got to tell you I'm going to support it...for sure and I want to tell you that I know that you worked diligently with your team, but also our staff worked very hard on this themselves. So that you Mr. City Manager, thank you Ramon, I know that they are very proud of

this as is your team, Mr. Codina's, so I am fully supportive of this and I think it's going to be a good project for the City of Coral Gables.

Mr. Codina: And I want to tell you that it was painful at times working because they were really great and they were acting in the best interest of the City. They had a lot of great additions that connected from street to street. We ended up loving it, but it was pushed hard by your staff and we were respectful of Ramon and your staff, but as a byproduct of that we ended up with a better place and even when your Manager insisted that he didn't just want the income but he wanted the physical spaces, we found a solution and a solution that doesn't make people come into our garage. A building of this size for Coral Gables it's hard not to have opposition. We presented to the neighbors and they saw how respectfully it's being done. They all thought it would be a great addition.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I think this is a model, we've had our discussions up here about Mediterranean versus is it Mediterranean or is it not, but this is a very good model of what we are trying to achieve when these developers come up here.

Commissioner Quesada: Well not only Mediterranean, I mean you look at our Code, I think its 3-408 and 4-201, the purpose is to create a pedestrian oriented urban environment and the cross walk and the courtyard is the embodiment of that, it really is and also again, thank you for the redesign to the rooftop, which is something that I think is important.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mr. Volsky: Mr. Mayor just a few minutes. I just want to say that Mr. Codina has contributed to...[inaudible – off mic]...in a big, big way without....[inaudible].

Mayor Cason: Thank you. Anymore discussion on this?

Commissioner Keon: No, it is a wonderful project.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, I needed to say one thing. During the presentation there was a comment that the removal of the planters, that the planters were there because the Code required it. I did wanted to make clear for the record that I did give an interpretation to the Planning and Zoning Board that there was a condition. This relates more to the TDR ordinance, but there was a condition. One of the factors you look at in approving the transfer of TDRs relates to the physical design of the proposed site plan and the manner in which the design mixed use of adequate provisions for public services, provides adequate control over vehicle traffic, provides for and protects designated common open areas and further the amenities of light and air,

recreational and visual enjoyment; and I gave an interpretation that in granting mitigation related to this factor that you could do that and so I do view it as consistent with the Zoning Code.

Mayor Cason: Alright. Do we have a motion?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I'll second it.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon makes the motion, the Vice Mayor seconds.

City Clerk

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Cason: Thank you very much.

Mr. Guilford: Thank you all very much.

Mayor Cason: Thank you for the project.

Commissioner Keon: What a pleasure.

[End: 10:28:12 a.m.]