

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items F-12, F-13, F-14 and F-17 are related
June 28, 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 Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Deputy City Attorney, Cristina Suárez
City Planner, Jennifer García
Development Services Director, Suramy Cabrera

Public Speaker(s)

Robert Behar
Mario Garcia-Serra
Hamed Rodriguez
Marsh Kriplen
Maria Cruz

Agenda Items F-12, F-13, F-14 and F-17 are related [1:22 p.m.]

An Ordinance of the City Commission amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay District Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-213, “Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments,” and Small Scale amendment procedures (ss. 163.3187, Florida Statutes), from “Commercial Mid-Rise Intensity” to

City Commission Meeting
June 28, 2022

Agenda Items F-12, F-13, F-14 and F-17 are related - Ordinances of the City Commission amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay District Map from Commercial Mid-Rise Intensity to Commercial High-Rise Intensity and extending the North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed-Use Overlay District, making zoning district changes from Mixed-Use 2 to Mixed-Use 3, and granting approval for a Planned Area Development for a proposed mixed-use project referred to as 1505 Ponce.

“Commercial High-Rise Intensity” for Lots 3 through 5 and Lots 18 through 20, and from “Multi-Family Medium Density” to “Commercial Mid-Rise Intensity” for Lot 6, Block 36, Douglas Section, and extending the “North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed-Use Overlay District” to include Lots 6 and 17 of said Block 36 (1505 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, 126 and 122 Menores Avenue), Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date.

Lobbyist: Mario Garcia-Serra

Lobbyist: Lauren Kahn

Lobbyist: Leslie E. Pantin

Lobbyist: Leonard Roberts

An Ordinance of the City Commission making zoning district boundary changes pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-212, “Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments,” for Lots 3 through 5 and Lots 18 through 20, from Mixed-Use 2 (MX2) District to Mixed-Use 3 (MX3) District, and for Lot 6, Block 36, Douglas Section, from Multi-Family 2 (MF2) District to Mixed-Use 2 (MX2) District; and extending the “North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed-Use Overlay District” to include Lots 6 and 17 of said Block 36 (1505 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, 126 and 122 Menores Avenue); providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (LEGAL DESCRIPTION ON FILE)

Lobbyist: Mario Garcia-Serra

Lobbyist: Lauren Kahn

Lobbyist: Leslie E. Pantin

Lobbyist: Leonard Roberts

An Ordinance of the City Commission granting approval of a Planned Area Development (PAD) pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-206, “General Procedures for Planned Area Development” for a proposed mixed-use project referred to as “1505 Ponce” on the property legally described as Lots 1 through 6 and Lots 17 through 22, Block 36, “Douglas Section” (1505 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, 126 and 122 Menores Avenue), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date.

Lobbyist: Mario Garcia-Serra

Lobbyist: Lauren Kahn

Lobbyist: Leslie E. Pantin

Lobbyist: Leonard Roberts

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 "1505 Ponce" on the property legally described as Lots 1 through 6 and Lots 17 through 22, Block 36, "Douglas Section" (1505 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, 126 and 122 Menores Avenue), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date.

(This Resolution is not for consideration at this time and will be included with the above ordinance on Second Reading if approved on First Reading.)

Lobbyist: Mario Garcia-Serra

Lobbyist: Lauren Kahn

Lobbyist: Leslie E. Pantin

Lobbyist: Leonard Roberts

Mayor Lago: Moving on to Item F-11. I want to read a quick statement onto the record. I'll be recusing myself from the following items due to a potential conflict and/or potential appearance of bias because I'm part owner of a property located across the street from the proposed project. And additionally, the property has been leased to an entity owned by a principal of the applicant. So, the following items are F-11, which has nothing to do with this item, F-12, F-14, F-18, and like I said, F-11. Mr. Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Mena: Thank you. And after that, we'll take a lunch break, and then we'll reconvene. F-11.

Deputy City Attorney Suárez: Mr. Vice Mayor, I don't know if you wanted to start with F-11 or the one that was time certain, which was F-12.

Vice Mayor Mena: That's fine. We can do F-12 first.

Deputy City Attorney Suárez: So, F-12, F-13, and F-14 will be consolidated for purposes of the public hearing. I'll read them into the record. F-12 is an ordinance of the City Commission amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay District Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-213, "Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments," and Small Scale amendment procedures, from "Commercial Mid-Rise Intensity" to "Commercial High-Rise Intensity" for Lots 3 through 5 and Lots 18 through 20, and from "Multi-Family Medium Density" to "Commercial Mid-Rise Intensity" for Lot 6, Block 36, Douglas Section, and extending the "North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed-Use Overlay District" to include Lots 6 and 17 of said Block 36 (1505 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, 126 and 122 Menores Avenue), Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. F-13 is an ordinance of the City Commission making zoning district boundary changes pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-212, "Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments," for Lots 3 through 5 and Lots 18 through 20, from Mixed-Use 2 District to Mixed-Use 3 District, and for Lot 6, Block 36, Douglas Section, from Multi-Family 2 District to Mixed-Use 2 District; and extending the "North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed-Use Overlay District" to include Lots 6 and 17 of said Block 36 (1505 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, 126 and 122 Menores Avenue); providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. F-14 is an ordinance of the City Commission granting approval of a Planned Area Development pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-206, "General Procedures for Planned Area Development" for a proposed mixed-use project referred to as "1505 Ponce" on the property legally described as Lots 1 through 6 and Lots 17 through 22, Block 36, "Douglas Section" (1505 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, 126 and 122 Menores Avenue), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. F-17 is a resolution approving the site plan. It's not on for consideration at this time. It's just there for

informational purposes. These are all quasi-judicial hearing items, so we would ask that you disclose any ex-parte communications at this time. And additionally, the Clerk should swear in any witnesses that will be testifying today.

City Clerk Urquia: Those appearing on this -- those who will be testifying on this item today, 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?

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Robert Behar: How are you doing? I just want to make a comment on this item. I'm Robert Behar for the applicant, but Mario Garcia-Serra's going to be presenting and he's on Zoom.

City Clerk Urquia: He is on Zoom, and he is ready to speak.

Mr. Behar: Okay, great, thank you.

Vice Mayor Mena: I just wanted to disclose I've had spoken briefly -- previously to Mr. Garcia-Serra regarding the proposal.

Commissioner Anderson: And I also have spoken with the applicant and Mr. Garcia-Serra as well.

Commissioner Menendez: So have I.

Mario Garcia-Serra: Good afternoon, Mr. Vice Mayor and Commissioners. Mario Garcia-Serra, with offices at 600 Brickell Avenue, representing Location Acquisitions, the contract purchaser of

the property located at 1505 Ponce de Leon Boulevard. My apologies for not being there in person today, but the rest of the project team is attending in person. And they are Rishi Kapoor, the principal of Location Acquisitions, LLC, Vivian Bonet, and Leonard Roberts, both with Location Acquisitions, Hamed Rodriguez, our project architect, and Matthew Lewis, our landscape architect. Mr. Kapoor's first project in Coral Gables, the Villa Valencia project at 515 Valencia Avenue, has achieved great success, and he is looking to replicate that model here at 1505 Ponce de Leon Boulevard. Villa Valencia is characterized by low-density, large units and generous public open spaces, and that is what is proposed at 1505 Ponce de Leon Boulevard. There is a lot to like about the 1505 Ponce project. Its density is less than half of what is presently permitted. Eighty units are proposed compared to the 179 units which would be permitted under today's zoning designations for the property. It is providing almost 30 percent of its lot area as open space, where only 20 percent of open space is required. Two public parks will be included as part of that open space area, a 6,600 square foot linear park fronting along Ponce de Leon Boulevard, and a 6,240 square foot park on the east side of the site, which would be ideal for a much-needed dog park in this area. Lastly, the one existing structure on the property, which is a small historic apartment building located at 122 Menores, which was built in 1925 and designed by George Fink, one of the City's founding architects, will be preserved, and adaptively reused as an amenity space and commercial area servicing the building as well as the public. I'm sure that all of you can appreciate that having a developer that embraces historic preservation, is building less than half the density permitted, and proffering two public parks as part of a project is unique and welcomed. Hamed, if you may, if you can bring up the aerial photo of the project site. There is the project site at 1.56 acres on the east side of Ponce de Leon Boulevard between Menores and Mendoza Avenues. You will see as part of the architectural presentation that a key feature of this project is moving the tower off of Ponce to avoid creating a sort of condo canyon situation along Ponce de Leon Boulevard where many of the other larger buildings are located fronting right on the Boulevard. However, in order to accomplish this, we need to expand the MX3 zoning which fronts on Ponce further east so that that proposed height of 16 stories can go slightly more to the east. Hamed, if you can now bring up the zoning map slide. As you can see from that slide which shows

the zoning maps, the existing zoning map and future land use map on the left side and the proposed changes, the designation on the right side, the existing zoning designations of MX3 and MX2 already exist on the property, and we're essentially extending them eastward in order to accommodate the proposed design of the building. Hamed, if you could go back to one of the renderings now. That change in zoning also results in a slight increase in FAR of about 20,000 square feet and also allows the easterly most two lots to be part of the receiver site for TDRs. We're essentially taking a property which has multiple land use and zoning designations and making it more uniform to facilitate what we think is a better design, which has considerable public benefit, low impact, and exceptional public benefit in the form of the public parks that are going to be provided. With that said, I would ask Hamed now to sort of walk you through the renderings of the plan and make the architectural presentation.

Hamed Rodriguez: Thank you, Mario. Good afternoon, members of the Commission, Vice Mayor, City Manager. My name is Hamed Rodriguez.

Vice Mayor Mena: Can you pull the microphone a little closer?

Mr. Rodriguez: Sorry.

Vice Mayor Mena: It's just a little harder to...

Mr. Rodriguez: Sorry about that. Hamed Rodriguez, architect, Hamed Rodriguez Architects at 275 Minorca, here in Coral Gables. Well, we're very pleased to present this project to everyone. We took a lot of pride in working with our clients on the last project, and they're great clients. They do exceptional thought process of what the product's going to be, wonderful materials. And it's another opportunity to bring to Coral Gables a stellar project. So, moving right along, this is the site pictures here, as you could see. And here's a little massing of -- but we'll get into the particulars in a second. The idea here is this one demonstrates that we wanted to take a little step

back from the edge of Ponce to create a green space and a linear park, as you could see there. We will show in a bit more detail -- let me take you around the building. So, the whole idea is to have the podium, which is -- houses retail and parking and amenities also step back a bit and create a scaled jog. And we were also stepping the building closer to the center so that we also create a park on the east side, which you'll see. We are restoring the Menores building, and we're going to keep the rear of it, which was probably the site of another building at one time, as a park and integrate that park into the Menores building. Here you could see in the yellow, this is a requirement of the amount of retail that we need to have, commercial or retail. So, in the front here, as you could see, which is stepped back from Ponce, the idea there is to have potentially restaurants. And then the other sides would be small businesses. It could be anything from retail to a professional service. I'll get back to this plan. Let's go over the aesthetics of the building. So, the idea here is we really took to heart the concept of embracing the Mediterranean Bonus and bringing to this building a sense of that. Not only did we check off all of the boxes, this building really has rich materials. We've taken motifs from Moorish elements to create screening, and there's a lot of depth and materials, so we have a lot of play in the structural columns and the amount of depth between surfaces. Here you could see we have a very elegant front to the building with a center portion marked as a pedestrian entrance, and the -- and it flanks the park here. Above...

Vice Mayor Mena: What is --? Sorry, I didn't...

Mr. Rodriguez: Sure.

Vice Mayor Mena: I guess that -- those boxes I see there, if you will, those are grates?

Mr. Rodriguez: Right. So, this right here -- there's going to be a closer image of that.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Mr. Rodriguez: So, this one right here is a -- what we have behind are louvers to shut off all lights from seeing any of the parking, any -- you will not see any lights, any headlights, any garage lights at all.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Mr. Rodriguez: And so, what we did is we're using depth there to create a decorative louver in front of that, much like we did in the Valencia project.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yep.

Mr. Rodriguez: And here, one of the sides, we have a -- the entrance to the lobby is from either the north or the south. And the entrance to the garage is internalized so you won't -- you wouldn't see cars pulling in and out of an opening. It's a pass-through. It's also going to be finished in very nice materials so the pedestrians can use it as an internalized street, much like what you see at Village of Merrick Park. Here we have the live/work on the ground, and we have a connectivity to the Menores building that you see there on the left. And we have closer images of that. We're also carrying through the same motif of the screen and introducing that into the railings of the balconies so that we have consistency. Here you can get a bird's-eye view of what the rear looks like. So, we've kept this podium that goes from what would be retail and parking and amenities, and it turns into live/work and residential. And this is just an over-simplified image of the park that's open to the public. It'd be maintained by the developer, and it also integrates the back of the Menores building, which we would -- right now, it's a very closed off façade. It only has small what would have been bathroom windows. So, the idea is to revitalize that, open up the back, and have that be very transparent so that the programs in the Menores building, which would likely be a coffee shop, ice cream, things of that nature, opens up into the park.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay. Is the --? Does the plan call for a --? It appears in that rendering it'd be like a double-wide sidewalk. Is that...

Mr. Rodriguez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: The rendering, or is that actually a part of the...?

Mr. Rodriguez: No, the sidewalk is actually -- this is correct.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Mr. Rodriguez: You'll see that when we get back into the plans.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Mr. Rodriguez: And then here we also have another paseo that goes from the north to the -- or from the -- either way, north or south, so that way you can walk towards the Menores building, around to the front of it, instead of having to go all the way around the building or through the vehicular driveway. And then here you could see the same paseo from the north looking back. Now, this would be the front linear park. And the idea here is, again, it's open to the public, public use. There's a colonnade, which is quite wide, that can also cover folks from rain and can be used for a few bistro tables for the restaurant. There's room for all. Here's another image pulling back. So, here you could really get a sense of the depth that we're putting into all of the detailing where we have the screen pushed back, we have planters, and we have a lot going on with the retail. We have a 25-foot high first floor, so we have an extensive amount of visibility towards what's going on to the retail. Going through the floor plates, this would be the one sublevel, which is primarily parking. We're leaving the space directly behind the historic building for large trees that are incorporated in the landscape. And this is the program here. We -- first floor, you get a sense of

how you access the parking. The one closer to the bottom is going up, the other one's going down. We have retail here. We worked with the Board of Architects too, and we took their suggestion of also including more glass around the back towards the inner driveway, so it doesn't become two blank walls. You're actually seeing what's going on in those restaurants. And then we have the live/work, which is a -- again, for whatever type of business ends up being there -- and then there's a second floor component to that, which would be more like the live component. We have a lobby and a little sundry, a little bit more retail on the internalized first floor, and then we have -- we're suggesting for the Menores building, historic building, creating a bar, like an ice cream bar, restrooms. And we're going to keep that front area there, which was the old living room with the fireplace and have an elevator to make it fully code compliant. This would be the next level up, which is the double height apartments. They're above the live/work and then a few units looking back towards the park. And this is the amenities level, so we have the pool deck level here, amenities. We have pool cabanas, and we have a second floor to those pool cabanas, and then we have the beginnings of the typical floors. And here we have a typical floor level. This goes all the way up to the 14th floor. And then the last two would be penthouses, which we are developing. And with that, I will leave it for landscape.

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Thank you, Hamed.

Mr. Rodriguez: Anyone have any questions?

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Matthew, if you could just make a short presentation on landscaping with particular attention to the proposed public parks.

Marsh Kriplen: Good afternoon. Slight change. Matthew had a family emergency. I'm Marsh Kriplen, the project landscape architect. Thank you for having us. It's an exciting project. This team has worked very hard to put together a proposal which we think fulfills both our needs but also contributes a great deal back to the community, and so I'm proud to be part of this and proud

to present this to you as we move forward. Moving from Ponce de Leon to the east in this project, I'll just go over very quickly what we're proposing in terms of the ground floor vegetation and planting. On Ponce de Leon, we have a series of street trees, as you can see, that will provide shade and also break up the parking that's -- the street parking there, followed by the colonnade and park, which includes a series of the four large Phoenix dactyliferas, which are the date palms, which we also used over at Villa Valencia. Flanked on either end of that, we're bringing in a little bit of excitement with some Guiana chestnut trees, which are a large canopy tree, not a native, but a tree that is pretty exciting and will help to mark both the north and south ends of the property. As we move then down the east-west streets, we go back to more of a standard street tree. Those are green buttonwoods, which are one of our good natives, which are, again, flanking the street parking. Up against the buildings, we have Clusias, which provide a little bit more privacy to those live/work spaces as we move to the east. And you can see those as the lighter green adjacent to the building. And then, as we move back to the north building, again, we add a little bit more interest with another Guiana chestnut, and then down in the south park, we're bringing in some large live oaks to complete that space.

Vice Mayor Mena: I'm sorry, because you touched on it, if I could ask. Where is it that you mentioned that you had the palms?

Mr. Kriplen: The palms are down the Ponce frontage behind the street trees, so they will celebrate that frontage. They'll work very well that colonnade, and they'll also provide us -- one of the things you all see when you see these renderings is the architectural is emphasized and the landscape is relatively pulled back in a lot of them. So, one of the things that they'll do is provide some additional screening for the grills that are on Ponce.

Vice Mayor Mena: So, are those -- and I apologize. The prior -- did I not see those on the prior renderings? Are they not on the actual renderings? I may have missed it.

Mr. Kriplen: Correct. On the renderings, we kind of keep them either very transparent or light so that we could show off the building. And then this presentation is for the actual plantings.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay, there was a bit of sort of consternation on -- I think it was on Villa Valencia, right?

Commissioner Anderson: Well, what happened was...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: I did sit down with the landscape architect, and we moved the palms. We changed which palms they were. And they put in date palms next the building where it's a more logical place to put palms, and then you put the big shade trees out to take care of the sidewalks and areas where pedestrians would be walking.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: So, it turned out very nice over there. And they mixed in also the oaks in between so you have sort of a tiered look.

Vice Mayor Mena: Which is part of my question here on the renderings that you had up a moment ago on the linear park facing Ponce. There were not only trees out, if you will, by the street, but also in the linear park. Will there also be shade trees in the linear park or just palm trees?

Mr. Kriplen: No, there are shade trees in the linear park as well.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Mr. Kriplen: So, to your point, it's the same methodology here as we did at Villa Valencia. On the street will be live oaks. One layer back from that, say the backside of the sidewalk, the front side of the park, will be Bridalveils, which is a nicer, lighter canopy, very ephemeral, if you will, with a wonderfully textured trunk. In the middle then, or one step back to the east of that screening the building itself will be the large dactyliferas. And our intent is that the installed sizes here would be similar to the installed sizes we have over at Villa Valencia.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay, as long as they're not in lieu of the other types of sort of -- and I use the word "shade trees" broadly -- but the non-palm trees in the linear park. Because we -- you know, we just -- I just don't want it to be inconsistent with what we're seeing there.

Mr. Kriplen: Right, and then at the last project, we even had a workshop with the City in order to get the landscape down right.

Commissioner Anderson: Right. And they were very receptive...

Vice Mayor Mena: Sure, no, no.

Commissioner Anderson: (INAUDIBLE) and make sure...

Vice Mayor Mena: That's why I'm asking.

Commissioner Anderson: We get the shade.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mr. Kriplen: So, this is still...

Commissioner Anderson: So, while we're interrupting you -- I'm going to interrupt you on the...

Mr. Kriplen: That's okay.

Commissioner Anderson: On the green island ficus because we're moving away from that because it hides trash and bottles and so forth.

Mr. Kriplen: Okay. We can certainly look at some other shrubs to...

Commissioner Anderson: Not only shrubs, but you might want to look for lower maintenance, something easier when someone dumps a bottle in there, where you can easily pick it up and get it out of there.

Mr. Kriplen: Got it. Okay, something a little bit lower, a little bit tighter possibly that...

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, so...

Mr. Kriplen: Is easier to see.

Commissioner Anderson: Go over with Ms. Bell-Llewellyn, and I'm sure she will come, you know, with a great recommendation for you.

Commissioner Fors: I have a question, City Manager. There was a prior proposed project on this site, right?

City Manager Iglesias: Yes. Yes, Commissioner.

Commissioner Fors: And in terms of open space, green space, how does that prior iteration compare to this one?

City Manager Iglesias: I don't believe it had as much open space as that linear park in front on Ponce, but it did maintain the rear park and the existing Fink structure.

Commissioner Fors: And how much less did it have, more or less?

City Manager Iglesias: Our City planner, I don't know if she recalls, but I don't believe it had that linear park as much in the front.

Commissioner Anderson: No.

Jennifer García: So, Jennifer García, City planner. So, that project that I think we're both thinking of didn't actually move forward to the process for review. It went to DRC and it kind of stopped right there.

City Manager Iglesias: It stopped right there. That was the Tibor Hollo project.

Ms. García: Right, exactly. So, they didn't include that linear park that's on Ponce. I think that's 34 -- sorry, 64, 100 square feet or so.

Mr. Kriplen: Yes. It's 30 by the width of the lot.

Ms. García: I think 20 or something.

Ms. García: Right.

Ms. García: But they didn't include that area in the back, so just think of this project without that segment, that linear green on Ponce.

City Manager Iglesias: I don't think it had very much (INAUDIBLE). It also had a paseo separating the park from the back from the building...

Ms. García: Right.

City Manager Iglesias: And storefront at that point.

Ms. García: Yeah. Again, that wasn't approved. That one just went through DRC, and it didn't really move forward from there.

City Manager Iglesias: They did not proceed with it.

Vice Mayor Mena: On the topic of -- and I'm sorry, I'll let you continue in a moment, just a broad question about the landscaping though. What do we put in place in the underlying documents approving this to just make sure that not only that the things that are being proposed and proffered are consistent with what ultimately -- because I know there's some leeway later, you know, if you need to adjust something, and that's fine. But we want to make sure that we see the level and type of landscaping that we're seeing proposed now, you know, a year later or two years later, whenever, you know, we get to the finish line here -- and also, in terms of maintenance, right? Like you have this linear park in the front, you know, drainage, irrigation. I'm sure they're planning for all these things, but you know, what do we do there? And then, my -- the other question I had was the park in the back on the west -- the east side...

Unidentified Speaker: East.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah. Is that --? That will continue to be a part of the project, it's just open to the public for certain hours.

Mr. Kriplen: It's open to the public.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right, okay.

Commissioner Fors: That's on what side?

Unidentified Speaker: The east side.

Mr. Kriplen: It's on the east side.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mr. Kriplen: And you know, it's also a buffer between the other neighbors.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, that's about...

Mr. Rodriguez: We've lost our presentation. But it's...

Vice Mayor Mena: There it is.

Commissioner Anderson: It's about a half a block from Phillip's Park.

Mr. Rodriguez: On our right, that's the historic house on the upper right, and then that's the linear -- or the east side park is the -- south from that.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah. I think it -- you know, on the renderings, I think it's something that you can easily lose sight of. But when you look at the east side of the building, it kind of looks like if it's pressed up against the property to east of it, but the property to the east of it is actually part of the property. It's that historic building and a park.

Mr. Rodriguez: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: So, there's a buffer there.

Mr. Rodriguez: Exactly. So, a typical setback -- and by the way, the dog park's going to be in that east park.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mr. Rodriguez: So, if we were to start from the minimum setback all the way to the east and do our step-backs, we still wouldn't have nearly the angle that we have by placing it where we did. So, I think with the...

Vice Mayor Mena: You're saying by stepping it off of Ponce.

Mr. Rodriguez: By -- both.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mr. Rodriguez: By stepping it off the east and stepping it off of Ponce. And therefore, the canopy, the tree canopy, as it matures, will also virtually make the tower go away.

Commissioner Anderson: So...

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: Since you're talking about that separation between the historic building and the new project, could you share with us the distance between the two buildings?

Mr. Rodriguez: Sure.

Commissioner Anderson: I think there's a walkway and there's a green area. There's some plantings.

Vice Mayor Mena: But the historic building is your building? It's part of your...

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Correct.

Mr. Rodriguez: That's part of the project.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right. Let's be clear.

Commissioner Anderson: It is.

Mr. Rodriguez: We can't move it.

Commissioner Anderson: I'm just looking at the...

Vice Mayor Mena: No, understood. I just want people to understand that because it kind of -- when you look at the rendering...

Commissioner Anderson: Oh, yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: It's a little bit -- you might think it's another property, but it's part of theirs.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah. This is the typical eight-unit building that...

Mr. Rodriguez: Oh, I think I have one with the dimensions.

Commissioner Anderson: You know, is proposed...

Mr. Rodriguez: Hang on.

Commissioner Anderson: Exist in that area.

Mr. Rodriguez: It's almost...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mr. Rodriguez: Twenty feet. It's about 18 feet, I believe.

Commissioner Anderson: Alright.

Mr. Rodriguez: To the back of the building, and then about 12 feet from the edge of the colonnade. And then here you could see -- this is just a schematic section. You could see that there's a clean

60 feet, and then a step back of 65, and then an ultimate step back of 70. Okay, right here, we have the dimensions. It's 24, 8.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay.

Vice Mayor Mena: Because the walkway with the trellis that you showed on the southeast corner, does that go all the way through to the north?

Mr. Rodriguez: That's it.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mr. Rodriguez: That's the one you're seeing there.

Vice Mayor Mena: Alright.

Mr. Rodriguez: And we're also using that to hide any back-of-house type door, so it's really clean.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, it's going to be a lovely area to walk through.

Commissioner Fors: Yeah, I'd love to see...

Commissioner Anderson: Compared to, you know, what it is now.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: It used to be an Oldsmobile lot.

Commissioner Fors: I love the linear park (INAUDIBLE).

Commissioner Anderson: I lived in that block, not in the historic building, but the one next door.

Commissioner Fors: I love the linear park on Ponce. I wish we can end up with more of that...

Commissioner Anderson: Oh, yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: That's actually...

Commissioner Fors: Area.

Vice Mayor Mena: It's actually -- before anybody else except me was here and the Mayor, we passed the Ponce Overlay, which I think this is within the Ponce Overlay.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: This is somewhat inconsistent with the Ponce Overlay in concept because the Ponce Overlay somewhat intentionally placed density on Ponce and then scaled it back towards the neighborhood. I -- to be clear, I voted against the Ponce Overlay, so I'm not disappointed at the inconsistencies. Maybe not the right word, but I think it's a good thing, frankly, that you have this green space in the front and a little bit of a buffer off of Ponce, particularly with the two buildings to the south of you already creating a pretty significant canyon effect. To have added a third there, you know, and then whatever comes forward...

Mr. Rodriguez: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: In the future is also, you know -- so I think it's a good thing. And you know, I under -- my main concern was, frankly, that when you push that height towards the east side of the property, what it means for then the neighbors to the east. But in this particular project -- and that's why I continue to highlight you have that buffer with the linear park and the historic building, which is part of your property, as opposed to if you had an immediately adjacent neighbor. You know, it'd be...

Mr. Rodriguez: Correct, correct.

Vice Mayor Mena: A pretty imposing building, but you have a bit of a buffer there. So, all things being equal, I think it's a better trade-off and a better result.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, I agree. And I like that openness there in front of Ponce. I think you're now going to have the features like you do in DC, where you have an enhanced walkable front area.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right. Sorry, I didn't know if there's anything else you wanted to cover on landscaping.

Mr. Kriplen: If you're content, I'm content. I think -- you know, I agree wholeheartedly. I think not only will the building provide us with shade along the Ponce frontage during the morning, but then in the afternoon, as soon as it comes across, we have the shade that we're going to be providing but with our vegetation. So, that will actually be a relatively wonderful walkable space, but it's wide enough that it also can be inhabited, so we're looking forward to really...

Commissioner Anderson: I looked at everything you're planting. The only one I picked on was the green island ficus.

Mr. Kriplen: I got to give you something so -- so thank you.

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Thank you very much, Marshall. The City staff is recommending approval with conditions. Planning and Zoning Board is also recommending approval with conditions. Those conditions are acceptable to us. Board of Architects received this project very well also. We conducted a neighborhood meeting where we had support for the project also. Some comments about the loss of on-street parking, which we tried to address as part of the Planning and Zoning Board review of the project. But really, it's a great project. It's been very well received. And we would ask that you follow those recommendations and vote to approve. And prior to concluding our presentation, I would just ask our client Rishi Kapoor to provide a few closing comments, and we'll reserve time for rebuttal -- if necessary -- after the public hearing.

Development Services Director Cabrera: Mario, this is Suramy. I just wanted to call up Jennifer because she does have a presentation ready with the staff approval and the conditions. So, could we bring up with the presentation, please?

Vice Mayor Mena: I don't want to cut out anything you're about to say, but to the extent it overlaps with anything they just said, obviously, like...

Ms. García: Yes, it does. I'm actually looking for the pointer.

Vice Mayor Mena: Clicker, anybody?

Ms. García: I'm sorry. Here it is right here. Alright. So, we know the location. The aerial is mostly vacant, except for the historic property that you guys asked about in the northeast corner. I'm going to run through this real quickly. (INAUDIBLE) conditions. Four requests, as Mario said, comprehensive plan map amendment, zoning map amendments, PAD designation, and the mixed use site plan. So, as he said, the comprehensive map amendments include basically three

things. They're moving the boundary of the commercial high-rise intensity further east, basically where that existing line -- the dashed green line is of the North Ponce Mixed-Use District. They're changing the land use of the historic property from multifamily to commercial, and then they're also extending that boundary of the North Ponce Mixed-Use District to include their entire property. The zoning map amendments are pretty much the same, extending MX3 over to the end of the -- more or less more where the end of the mixed-use boundary is, changing the zoning from MF2 to MX2 and extending that boundary. The PAD, like you said, includes the dog park, the linear plaza, which is 6,600 square feet, traffic calming, as recommended by staff, and also adaptive reuse of the historic building. Mixed-use site plan, you guys looked at that. As part of the pedestrian -- the dog park, live/work units facing Mendoza and Menores, linear plaza on Ponce, and the ground floor retail. And 1505 Ponce, that includes -- I think he went through all this. Twenty-nine percent, well over the open space requirements. And I just want to say that actually is all open to this sky. They're not including any arcade area, any right-of-way improvements. That's all open to the sky, a landscape area. Density is well below the maximum. The highest of the maximum at 16 stories, 190 feet. FAR is 4.375, and they'll be getting that by securing TDRs at a later date. The front setback is 30 feet. They've gone to the DRC from March, Board of Architects in April and May, neighborhood meeting also in May, Planning and Zoning Board in June. And here we are for first reading. Property letters went out to the property owners within 1,500 feet. Three times for the letters to the owners, three times for property postings, four times for the website posting, and one time for the legal ad. So, it was found to be consistent with the comp plan, and staff recommended approval of the land use changes for the comp plan, as well as the zoning map amendments, and then approval with conditions for the PAD (INAUDIBLE) and also, the mixed-use site plan. So, the conditions of approval are included in your packet as far as the ordinances and resolutions go. But there's four that are more or less very different than usual. One is to complete the TDR process within six months of the approval. Number two is traffic calming. Given past projects, there's been a very strong interest by the Commission to implement these traffic calming plans in the area. So, this will include some crosswalks, access to Phillips Park, as well as some speed cushions as planned by the traffic calming plan. Sidewalk extensions

a little bit north at the intersection of Galiano and Sidonia. And then number four is providing a remote residential parking within the parking garage at a rate of twice the amount that they'll be losing to the bulb-outs on the street, providing that as an amenity to the neighborhoods. I think that's it.

Commissioner Anderson: So, I had a question for you on the traffic calming.

Ms. García: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: I noticed you only focused on Mendoza, and Menores is quite the cut-through between Douglas traffic coming off of 16th, coming across the north side of Publix, past Phillips Park. You know, you're dealing with a youth zone there, a lot of children there, and all the way through to Ponce itself, which right now is a right-turn only. But the traffic coming through at that intersection of Galiano and Menores is very fast.

Ms. García: Right, so...

Commissioner Anderson: So, this is some...

Ms. García: We can talk with Public Works as far as expanding that. Right now, this is just taking from what the recommendation is from their consultant for the zero block, which is where Publix is, the zero block of Menores, and then the 200 block of Menores, which is the other side of Ponce.

Commissioner Anderson: Right. Because we have the entrance of that Phillips Park right there. This is...

Ms. García: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: A very critical area, and it needs some special attention, more so than...

Ms. García: Absolutely.

Commissioner Anderson: Any other project you would coming through. So, I'd ask that that be addressed...

Ms. García: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: At the same time. And as far as the parking demands are in that area, it's -- again, we're not just talking about loss of on-street parking for bump outs. We're talking about there's a -- not only demand from Phillips Park, but you have a number of historical buildings on that block. 102 Menores -- and I'm just going to give you some examples -- is a 12-unit apartment building and can easily occupy at least 12 to 24 spaces on a city block. You go a little further down to 118 Menores and 122, each one of those are eight-unit buildings. Each one of those usually has two occupants in it now with two cars, historic buildings with zero parking on them. So, the parking demands here -- and I'm not even going to address the other blocks there -- are much more intense than we would experience in a typical area that has a garden apartment because these are all historic buildings there. So, I know the original recommendation was for 20 spaces, and then it went down to 10 spaces. I'd urge that the 20 spaces be part of what's included in this project in order not to burden the area and be able to serve Phillips Park as best as possible as well.

Vice Mayor Mena: But sorry, just to make sure I understand -- because I'm hearing 10, 20. The -- what I read on the conditions is it's...

Ms. García: Twice the amount of loss.

Vice Mayor Mena: It's twice the amount of the net loss of spaces, right?

Ms. García: Applicant requested that it be some kind of mechanism as far as how much they're impacting the streets.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, I agree.

Ms. García: Mario can...

Vice Mayor Mena: I agree with that.

Ms. García: Offer up more, yeah.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, no, the original recommendation was 20 spaces.

Vice Mayor Mena: But what is...

Ms. García: But you had concern.

Vice Mayor Mena: Sorry. What is two times the net loss? I don't know if it's 20 or 10 or what it is.

Ms. García: They're still studying the actual street design to see if they can remove any of those bulb-outs, especially on the loading area, as well as on Ponce. There's an extra two or three bulb-outs they could probably remove, so they're still studying that. And then once Parking can review how much that loss is, then we'll know what that number is.

Vice Mayor Mena: Will that be resolved prior to second reading?

Ms. García: We can.

Commissioner Anderson: You know, I'd like it to be resolved...

Ms. García: Fine.

Commissioner Anderson: Prior to the second reading and to take in account the parking demand of Phillips Park and the parking demand of the historic buildings in the area.

Ms. García: Okay.

Vice Mayor Mena: I don't -- we should probably vote on that because I don't necessarily agree with that. I don't think the applicant is necessarily responsible for parking the entire, you know - - so, to me, it should be a factor of the net loss. So, I'm like -- that's why my question is, what is the net loss? And it seems like there's still some, you know...

Ms. García: Figuring out to do.

Vice Mayor Mena: Some uncertainty there. So, I'm comfortable with making it a factor of the net loss, but I need to at least understand...

Mr. Rodriguez: No, I'll tell you what it is right now. As it's currently designed, there's 31 legitimate parking spaces there around the three streets of Menores...

Vice Mayor Mena: What are legitimate parking spaces?

Mr. Rodriguez: Meaning there's curb cuts. There's four curb cuts.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Mr. Rodriguez: People park in front of the curb cuts right now.

Vice Mayor Mena: Gotcha.

Mr. Rodriguez: So, if you were to take the definition of the 20-foot long parallel parking space, there's 31 spaces.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Mr. Rodriguez: As currently designed with the bulb-outs, we have 22. If we were to keep the bulb-outs on the north and the south, but remove the additional bulb-outs we have in -- on Ponce...

Vice Mayor Mena: Can you show me that on the rendering, please?

Mr. Rodriguez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Can we put up there --? Sorry, just so I understand what we're...

Mr. Rodriguez: No, we could use this right here. So, if -- so right now we have -- looking at the top here, this one we -- we left this one alone. We have bulb-outs here for the curbs on all -- everywhere that we have a curb cut. So, we have one curb cut less than what's currently around the site. And then if we were to remove these, then we pick up 26 spaces. So, then our net loss would...

Commissioner Anderson: I lost your arrow. Where is it?

Mr. Rodriguez: Right over here...

Vice Mayor Mena: West side.

Mr. Rodriguez: On Ponce.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay, west side.

Vice Mayor Mena: So, the bulb-outs that you're considering removing, are those three or all five?

Mr. Rodriguez: Just the three.

Vice Mayor Mena: There's five on that. Am I right about that?

Mr. Rodriguez: Well, if you count the corners.

Vice Mayor Mena: Curb -- okay.

Mr. Rodriguez: Right, so just the three.

Vice Mayor Mena: So, you're talking about removing the three, and that would add what?

Mr. Rodriguez: That would mean we lost 5 out of the 31.

Vice Mayor Mena: But you're going from 22 spaces to 26.

Mr. Rodriguez: Correct.

Vice Mayor Mena: And you're at a net five, so you have 10 -- you have to have 10 then in the garage.

Mr. Rodriguez: Correct, right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Are you...?

Mr. Rodriguez: And then we thought about these because the -- you know, the visibility to the park and to the retail seemed to make sense.

Vice Mayor Mena: And sorry, what you're telling me then on the north and south side is that...

Mr. Rodriguez: We would leave that alone.

Vice Mayor Mena: But you've already accounted for whatever net loss there was on those sides...

Mr. Rodriguez: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: With that...

Mr. Rodriguez: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Within that number.

Mr. Rodriguez: That's our number. Our number right now as proposed is 22. With these three bulb-outs eliminated, we go up to 26, so it'd be five spaces.

Vice Mayor Mena: And you're counting all the way through, I assume...

Mr. Rodriguez: Yes. We did an actual technical drawing...

Vice Mayor Mena: All the way to the east property line.

Mr. Rodriguez: Right, to the property line. And we actually have a little extra space that we can't use for anything, maybe another bulb-out. But that's the official number.

Commissioner Anderson: How would that affect the landscaping?

Mr. Rodriguez: We would have to put the shade trees inside that line.

Mr. Kriplen: Yeah. We would roll them inboard, and we might need to look at the width of that sidewalk, but we could accommodate that.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, there may...

Mr. Rodriguez: Those (INAUDIBLE) would move -- instead of in the bulb-outs, they would move into the sidewalk, and we would have to reconfigure...

Commissioner Anderson: Curve the sidewalk. It doesn't have to be a straight sidewalk, right?

Mr. Kriplen: It doesn't have to be a straight sidewalk, no.

Mr. Rodriguez: I mean, if you look at the museum, the sidewalk is the courtyard...

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Mr. Rodriguez: Which is...

Vice Mayor Mena: Are you not able to accommodate the two times factor if you stay at the 22 spaces?

Mr. Rodriguez: Currently...

Vice Mayor Mena: Can we leave the bulb-outs and still meet the condition is the simple question.

Mr. Rodriguez: We do have an overage on parking within the building, and we always start off a design with an overage because we know we're going to lose some as we finished the design. And we have the counts as an overage. This being commercial, once this becomes restaurants, then the parking makeup is different based on the net area of the patrons. So, therefore, that's why we have an overage. So, I don't know if we can accommodate the 20 or if we can't. It seems close.

Commissioner Anderson: Let's take a look at it because, I mean, the site is what the site is, and the site is near Phillips Park, and the site is, you know, in a location with a lot of historic buildings. So, what I'm asking for is I want to see the numbers.

Mr. Rodriguez: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: You know, what's the parking demand in the area. It's historically been extremely high and tight to get parking. As newer projects come in, it may have brought down the number, but until we do this analysis -- I mean, I can tell you what the parking demands are for three buildings, and I know there's a high demand because of Phillips Park. We don't want to end up with another Jaycee Park. That's what we don't want, okay?

Mr. Rodriguez: We'll have those numbers.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay, thank you.

Vice Mayor Mena: On the -- going back to the conditions of approval, the -- I'm assuming the speed tables and traffic calming that we're talking about are consistent with the quality of speed table we've been doing in other places...

Ms. García: Exactly, yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: With pavers and the whole thing.

Ms. García: Um-hum.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: Vice Mayor, everything will be by our standards.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Ms. García: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Last point. I know there's been some discussion about TDRs, and the source of those TDRs, and the ability to, you know, create revenue from TDRs for the City to be applied towards neighboring parks or whatever it may be. I understand that that's not done yet, and there's still discussions happening. I just -- I'd like to have some more clarity on that before second reading because, to me, that was -- I don't want to say an important factor, but a factor when -- in considering this project. And so, if we can do it that way, I think it could be a good thing. But we

can talk about that with staff, and I just want to be updated on that prior to second reading personally.

Ms. García: Okay.

Vice Mayor Mena: Alright.

City Manager Iglesias: As we discussed, Vice Mayor, those TDRs will be used for probably -- for projects that have a lot of public -- great public importance.

Vice Mayor Mena: Well, look, we have -- you know, Phillips Park is a stone's throw away. We've talked a lot about Phillips Park. We have the need for budget dollars, which we discussed at our last budget meeting, so I think there's a lot of synergy there that it would make some sense if we could figure that out and do it in that way. I think it would be great for everybody including the project and the people who are residents there eventually. So, you know, I'm just putting that on everybody's radar, if we can try to work something out before -- you know, I'm not saying completely and totally have it ironed out, but at least have an update on where that stands and whether that's still a possibility. I think it would go a long way.

Commissioner Menendez: I just want to add that with regards to Phillips Park, you know, last time I said I'd bring back a funding mechanism as part of the discussion.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Menendez: And that's a -- for example, that's one perfect example of a true public benefit.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Menendez: So, I think, at the end of the day, a lot of good can come out of this project, and hopefully, we can create a process going forward that we benefit the community long-term. So, thank you.

Vice Mayor Mena: So, yeah, I would just ask the applicant -- I'm a vote in favor today and -- but before second reading, if those -- for me are the two items: what's happening with that parking condition and what's happening with the TDRs. If we can square that away, I think everything else is in good shape. Again, I think it's a great project and appreciate everybody's efforts.

Commissioner Fors: Same for me, parking and TDRs.

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Agreed, Mr. Vice Mayor.

Commissioner Fors: Otherwise, I'm ready to go.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, same here.

Vice Mayor Mena: Any other...? Mr. Clerk, any public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir. We do have one speaker. It's Ms. Maria Cruz.

Maria Cruz: Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. I have several comments. The first one is, I would like to know -- I requested information as to why the zoning -- Planning and Zoning meeting was moved from their scheduled meeting date to the day before. I know the reason. The reason was to be able to make this Commission meeting for the first hearing. But in the -- I guess for transparency's sake, I've requested information about any and all communications requesting the change because I know the change was requested, and obviously, it was a special meeting because

Attorney Garcia-Serra thanked the board for the special meeting. And I'm interested to know how do we accomplish moving a scheduled meeting to a different day because some other people may be interested to do that, and we need to make sure they understand who they need to reach out to change the meetings from meeting dates.

Vice Mayor Mena: Could we...?

Ms. Cruz: Okay?

Vice Mayor Mena: Just on that point -- and I'll give you all your time, so if you can stop her time, please. On that point, I didn't know the meeting had been moved. If -- I'm assuming it still complied with any and all notice requirements relating to said meeting.

Deputy City Attorney Suárez: It is my understanding that it -- all mail notices were sent out. It was all provided. It was a special meeting on the 21st that was scheduled.

Development Services Director Cabrera: Correct. And the reason why it was done is that the previous Planning and Zoning meeting, which they had meant to schedule to be on that one, already had a very large project that was somewhat controversial, which did run up to after 10 o'clock at night that evening. So, we obviously...

Vice Mayor Mena: So, you're saying it got bumped from the prior meeting.

Development Services Director Cabrera: It got bumped. We...

Vice Mayor Mena: They were supposed to have gone on the prior meeting, and they got bumped, right?

Deputy City Attorney Suárez: Correct.

Development Services Director Cabrera: We didn't want to schedule it because we don't want to have two very large projects in one Planning and Zoning meeting.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, let me -- correction, because I sat through both meetings. This project was not scheduled, was not on the agenda for the previous meeting.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, they bumped it because they didn't want to have two large projects...

Development Services Director Cabrera: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: On the same meeting.

Ms. Cruz: Okay.

Development Services Director Cabrera: We never scheduled it.

Ms. Cruz: So, it was not scheduled for that day.

Vice Mayor Mena: It was supposed to...

Development Services Director Cabrera: Correct.

Vice Mayor Mena: Have been, but they bumped it before the meeting.

Ms. Cruz: Okay. But how would that keep it from having it the regular day? I don't understand. It could have been...

Vice Mayor Mena: It's an accommodation for having been bumped from the prior meeting.

Ms. Cruz: Well, but -- once again, I would like to know how it was requested and how it was approved.

Vice Mayor Mena: You should get any information you're entitled to, absolutely.

Ms. Cruz: Because, as you know, other people may want to do the same thing, and we want to -- in the...

Vice Mayor Mena: Absolutely.

Ms. Cruz: Transparency...

Vice Mayor Mena: Absolutely.

Ms. Cruz: We want to know how to do it.

Vice Mayor Mena: We get contacted every day by residents that want help with...

Ms. Cruz: You know...

Vice Mayor Mena: Permits...

Ms. Cruz: But I requested it.

Vice Mayor Mena: And all kinds of things, so you know, we do what...

Ms. Cruz: Listen...

Vice Mayor Mena: We can to accommodate people.

Ms. Cruz: I wanted to have it for today, but obviously, it was not provided by today. Okay, at the previous meeting in May -- I think the last meeting in May, the dog park was presented as a temporary park. Did I hear today that this is a permanent dog park?

Vice Mayor Mena: I think you're -- I could be wrong. I think you're talking about...

City Manager Iglesias: The temporary park will be the current site.

Vice Mayor Mena: The current site, right, exactly.

City Manager Iglesias: And that will be a temporary park...

Vice Mayor Mena: Then a permanent.

City Manager Iglesias: Until construction starts.

Ms. Cruz: Wait, wait.

Vice Mayor Mena: Before construction, temporary; once constructed, there'll be a permanent dog park there.

Ms. Cruz: It'll be there.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, on the east.

Ms. Cruz: That's what I'm asking.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Ms. Cruz: Because I listened to both -- the agenda, the previous meeting again, and it did not sound like that. I'm just making sure. Okay, I know, once again, my -- one of my big objections is that when people buy property, they need to see what they can build there, instead of buying and then coming through with all these kinds of requests so they can do something that is not meant to be there. And of course, we end up -- you know, once they buy it, we have to help them along because otherwise they will not make money and et cetera, et cetera. Okay, so Mediterranean. I know that at the meeting that I attended, the Planning and Zoning, this is a modern Mediterranean. I'm sorry. Merrick must be turning over, over, and over in his grave because this doesn't look Mediterranean at all or -- okay. I also heard there that the paseo -- or colonnade I guess it was called today -- I don't know what the difference is, so one or the other. On the bottom floor is right next to where the restroom would be so they can have outdoor seating there. Then it's not a paseo. If I cannot walk through it, if it's being used as an extension of the restaurant, it's not the same.

Vice Mayor Mena: We have that all over the city, Mrs. Cruz. We have...

Ms. Cruz: Yes, but this is a new building.

Vice Mayor Mena: It has to be adequate space, the amount of seating they will be able to put...

Ms. Cruz: Well...

Vice Mayor Mena: Will be dictated by the size of the space and what's appropriate.

Ms. Cruz: Because we were burned before with the Aloft or whatever, I'm making sure because when you make it a paseo, it's meant to be a paseo, not a place to put tables. So, this is a new building. If the building was already built, that's a different story.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Ms. Cruz: But if we're planning it to make it an access to put tables, then let's not call it paseo.

Vice Mayor Mena: I mean, sure. We could...

Ms. Cruz: Because -- no, because if we call it...

Vice Mayor Mena: (INAUDIBLE).

Ms. Cruz: A paseo, it means the Mediterranean requirement -- come on. That's the key right there.

Vice Mayor Mena: The Mediterranean...

Ms. Cruz: You know, we can play.

Vice Mayor Mena: Mediterranean requirement is an aesthetic.

Ms. Cruz: To have...

Vice Mayor Mena: And that's one of the many components that could go into it.

Ms. Cruz: But it's not meant to be used for...

Vice Mayor Mena: So, you don't think colonnades in the city should have tables or outdoor seating at any time?

Ms. Cruz: I understand, but this is...

Vice Mayor Mena: I'm asking.

Ms. Cruz: A new project. You know, if we already had the building and then we allow them to put the tables is one thing. If we build the building using this as -- to get the bonus of the Mediterranean, then it should not be planned for tables. It should be a paseo.

Commissioner Anderson: Vice Mayor.

Ms. Cruz: That's what I'm saying.

Commissioner Anderson: Vice Mayor, if I may suggest we ask them if they're going to have the fold-out frontage doors to accommodate the need for outdoor dining as opposed to occupying a paseo like it was done on the Colonnade, which used to be open for the pedestrians later on. So, can we have the applicant respond to that question?

Mr. Rodriguez: Sure, I'll respond to that. The idea is that it's a covered space with shade, and we were going to put more than likely bistro tables. And Fire's also going to dictate clear access lanes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mr. Rodriguez: So -- and ADA, absolutely.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: Right. So, how wide is that paseo?

Mr. Rodriguez: It's 15 feet.

Commissioner Anderson: It's 15 feet. So, between servers and ADA access, you have to probably have about six foot clear, just off the top of my head.

Mr. Rodriguez: Six foot is more than enough.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Mr. Rodriguez: Yeah.

Commissioner Anderson: So that there's free and easy access for pedestrians.

Mr. Rodriguez: And not to mention it's open towards the front park...

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Mr. Rodriguez: You know, for egress.

Ms. Cruz: Okay. The next ques -- I'm telling you the next question -- you know, I love to go places where people are sitting down and you have to walk between the servers and the tables, but that's...

Vice Mayor Mena: And I...

Ms. Cruz: But that's what we're announcing here.

Vice Mayor Mena: Mrs. Cruz, I got to tell you, I love outdoor cafés. I think they're great.

Ms. Cruz: I know.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think the restaurants in the colonnade of the Colonnade building are a great addition. I think -- you know, so there's a little -- you have to have the right give and take. I think you have to have the right amount of space. I don't think you can overdo it. You still have to comply with ADA, fire, et cetera, and we'll do that. But to say that there shouldn't be any I don't think is...

Ms. Cruz: No.

Vice Mayor Mena: Is correct.

Ms. Cruz: I have absolutely no problem with having the outside seating. I have the problem getting the Mediterranean Bonus for having a paseo that you're going to be using...

Vice Mayor Mena: Colonnade.

Ms. Cruz: For something else.

Vice Mayor Mena: It's a colonnade. You're referring to the colonnade if I'm correct, right?

Ms. Cruz: Yes, but that's what they're getting credit for the Mediterranean Bonus.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Ms. Cruz: Okay. Also, at that meeting, I heard that the historic building was going to be for amenities. That's how it was presented. Then somewhere in the middle of the meeting, "Well, you know, maybe the second floor we could rent for offices today." Today, it was presented as amenities/commercial. Now, we know it's going to be commercial because, you know, we've been progressing towards that, so forget about the amenities that was the original thought, okay. I don't know how they're going to make offices in apartments that have bathrooms with tubs and et cetera, et cetera, but that's not my problem how they do it. It's a historical building.

Vice Mayor Mena: It is.

Ms. Cruz: Okay. Alright, now, something I saw today that I didn't see before, if you look at the linear park, there are bushes in front. How do people access? They have to go through the building to go to the park?

Vice Mayor Mena: We'll have the applicant...

Ms. Cruz: Because if it's a public park...

Vice Mayor Mena: Address it in a moment, yeah.

Ms. Cruz: Yeah, if it's a public park, it should have access from the street, correct?

Vice Mayor Mena: I believe there's an entrance if I'm not mistaken.

Ms. Cruz: I don't know.

Vice Mayor Mena: But I'm not sure. They could address that.

Mr. Rodriguez: Are you ref...?

Vice Mayor Mena: Why don't we do this? Let's let her finish her comments because you're already over time. So, if you could...

Ms. Cruz: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: Finish your comments, and then we'll have them address any questions.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, so that. And once again, once again, you know, it's time for people to buy properties based on what they can do and not have to bend all the stuff so they can...

Vice Mayor Mena: You think it's a -- do you --? I guess my question for you on that -- and I understand your point.

Ms. Cruz: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: Do you --? The question is, is it a better project as a result.

Ms. Cruz: Well...

Vice Mayor Mena: For everybody.

Ms. Cruz: You know what? I think I would have loved the project someplace else, okay. That's my idea. I think they do wonderful projects, but the place -- because the first thing that I objected to the first time we heard it -- and today they were wise enough, they didn't say it -- well, there are two big buildings on the other side already, so this would be the third one. Hello. And then the next one that comes will be the fourth one because...

Vice Mayor Mena: Well, it's zoned that way.

Ms. Cruz: Once you build...

Vice Mayor Mena: No, my question for you is this, would you have rather -- like we talked about earlier...

Ms. Cruz: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: If they had stuck to the existing zoning and the overlay that was passed, would you rather have a building all the way up on Ponce, another one, creating a canyon effect?

Ms. Cruz: Well...

Vice Mayor Mena: Or do we think -- I think most of us agree...

Ms. Cruz: I...

Vice Mayor Mena: That the change that's being requested is an improvement because now you're able to set the building off back off Ponce.

Ms. Cruz: Yeah, but the changed...

Vice Mayor Mena: That's the question.

Ms. Cruz: The change has nothing to do -- you could have moved the building and only make it 14 floors. You didn't have to -- in order to move the building, you didn't have to make it humongous. You could have moved it a smaller building.

Vice Mayor Mena: Well, it's not humongous. It's...

Ms. Cruz: Sixteen floors.

Vice Mayor Mena: Sure, but it's 50 percent of the density, right? So, it depends how you look at it. But my point is, you know, there's a request and...

Ms. Cruz: No, I understand.

Vice Mayor Mena: The question becomes -- we can be cynical about it and say, you know, "Oh, wow. People buy something and then they want to change something."

Ms. Cruz: That's what they do.

Vice Mayor Mena: But if what they're changing is a net positive to everybody, I think that's a good thing. And that's frankly our job here to assess that. And then I think we've talked about it, and we all feel like setting it back off of Ponce -- and so -- and by the way, so did the boards that it went through and so did this dais felt like that's a net positive.

Ms. Cruz: That's alright. I just -- you know me. I just ask the questions because when somebody else comes...

Vice Mayor Mena: No, you do more than ask questions.

Ms. Cruz: When somebody else comes along...

Vice Mayor Mena: You do more than ask questions.

Ms. Cruz: And they say the same thing, we're going to have to...

Vice Mayor Mena: I know.

Ms. Cruz: Bend backwards again because...

Vice Mayor Mena: I know.

Ms. Cruz: They come up with a...

Vice Mayor Mena: But you're good, you're good. You don't just ask questions. You imply things very smoothly, so we appreciate you.

Ms. Cruz: That's the teacher (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Mena: I know. Thank you very much.

Ms. Cruz: You're welcome.

Commissioner Anderson: Experience pays.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Vice Mayor Mena: Sorry, do the -- does the applicant just want to address the one question about accessibility to the linear park on the...

Commissioner Fors: East side or...

Vice Mayor Mena: On the west side of the building?

Commissioner Fors: West side, west side.

Mr. Rodriguez: Sure, I'll address both linear parks. The east side was -- obviously, on the north is the north, so that's relatively straightforward. South is the dog park. And as you can see from the diagram, we do have access off of the street from the south, but then there will also be access -- I don't think we have that maybe finalized from the west side. That would be from the arcade that runs down the west side of the building. On the east -- on the west side of the building, again, that park is intended to be -- well, it's a park, so it needs to have space and place to gather. And so, it will be accessible from multiple sides, but predominantly the east and the west, as you can see it's clear and open along most of if not all of its length, only capped at the north and south by some low planters that help to sort of embrace it and give it a little bit of definition.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah. My only two cents on that is, you know, like at University of Miami, you can just basically flow through the campus. You know, when people park in front of your property, you want them to be able to flow in to the -- be able to get the restaurant without having to go all the way around.

Vice Mayor Mena: Alright. Unless there's any other comment, Madam City Attorney, do you need a vote on each item?

Deputy City Attorney Suárez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay. So, somebody make a motion on F-12.

Commissioner Menendez: I'll move it.

Commissioner Anderson: Second.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

(Vote: 4-0)

Vice Mayor Mena: F-13.

Commissioner Anderson: I'll move it.

Commissioner Menendez: Second.

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

(Vote: 4-0)

Vice Mayor Mena: F-14.

Commissioner Menendez: I'll move it.

Commissioner Anderson: I'll second.

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

(Vote: 4-0)