

# City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
[www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com)



## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 19, 2024

3:00 PM

Police and Fire Headquarters, Community Meeting Room

### Historic Preservation Board

*Chairperson Michael J. Maxwell*  
*Vice Chairperson Alejandro Silva*  
*Board Member Ana Alvarez*  
*Board Member Javier Banos*  
*Board Member Michelle Cuervo Dunaj*  
*Board Member Xavier F. Durana*  
*Board Member Cesar Garcia-Pons*  
*Board Member Margaret Rolando*  
*Board Member Dona Spain*

The Historic Preservation Board will be holding its Regular Meeting on December 19, 2024, commencing at 3:00 pm EST.

Pursuant to Resolution No. 2021-118, the City of Coral Gables has returned to traditional in-person meetings.

Accordingly, any individual wishing to provide sworn testimony shall be present physically in the Commission Chambers. However, the Historic Preservation Board has established the ability for the public to provide comments (non-sworn and without evidentiary value) virtually.

Accordingly, only individuals who wish to provide public comment in this format, may appear and provide those comments via Zoom.

Members of the public may join the meeting via Zoom at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88413827534>.

In addition, a dedicated phone line will be available so that any individual who does not wish (or is unable) to use Zoom may listen to and participate in the meeting.

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**305-461-6769 (Coral Gables local number)**

To speak to the Historic Preservation Board on an Agenda Item, please “Raise your Hand” or send a message to one of the meeting hosts using the Zoom Platform.

If you joined the meeting via telephone, you can “Raise your hand” by pressing \*9.

## I. CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was Called to Order at 3:04 PM by Chairperson Maxwell.

### Staff Present:

Anna Pernas, Director

Kara Kautz, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer

Stephanie Throckmorton, Deputy City Attorney

Amos Rojas, Jr. City Manager

Joe Gomez, Assistant City Manager

Hermes Diaz, Public Works Director

## II. ROLL CALL

**Present:** 8 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

## III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

1. [24-8420](#) Historic Preservation Board Meeting Minutes for October 16, 2024

**A motion was made by Board Member Banos, seconded by Board Member Garcia-Pons, to approve the minutes for the October 16, 2024, Historic Preservation Board meeting. This motion passed by the following vote:**

**Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

2. [24-8421](#) Historic Preservation Board Meeting Minutes for November 20, 2024

**A motion was made by Board Member Banos, seconded by Board Member Garcia-Pons, to approve the minutes for the November 20, 2024, Historic Preservation Board meeting. This motion passed by the following vote:**

**Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

## IV. CITY COMMISSION ITEM

3:11 PM - Board Members left the room to view the sample of the proposed window replacement for City Hall. No discussions occurred during this break.

3:17 PM - Board Members have returned and meeting resumes.

1. [24-8422](#) Historic Preservation Board review of the window replacement proposal for the City Hall Complex

Ms. Pernas read from the Staff Analysis as the PowerPoint presentation played on screen.

**Presentation on Windows:**

Natividad Soto, President - Ferguson, Glasgow, Schuster, Soto, Inc.

Claudia Noval, Project Architect - Ferguson, Glasgow, Schuster, Soto, Inc.

Amos Rojas, Jr. City Manager

Joe Gomez, Assistant City Manager

Hermes Diaz, Public Works Director

Please refer to Exhibit A attached for the verbatim transcript.

**Public Comment Received by Staff:**

Karelia Carbonell on behalf of the Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables

**Public Comment:**

Venny Torre, Torre Companies & Development

A motion was made by Board Member Banos, seconded by Board Member Garcia-Pons, to defer this item for additional information about the windows and doors to be provided by the city and that it will not proceed to the City Commission until further review by this Board. This motion passed by the following vote:

**Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

## **V. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

1. Concluding the statement on Ex-Parte Communications, Chairperson Maxwell invited the Board Members and the public to view the mock-up of a window proposed for City Hall.
2. The Staff received a request to hear the City Commission Item - City Hall Windows item as the first item in the Agenda.

## **VI. PUBLIC HEARING**

## VII. LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS

1. [24-8411](#) CASE FILE LHD 2024-013: Consideration of the local historic designation of the property at **720 Madeira Avenue**, legally described as Lot 7, Block 7, Coral Estates Section, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 19, at Page 7, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Ms. Guin read from the Staff Report as the PowerPoint presentation played on screen.

**On Behalf of the Applicant:**

The Property Owner, Venny Torre, Torre Companies & Development, was present and stated his support of the application.

**Letters of Support Received by Staff:**

Ellen Dyer, Vicki Cerda, Bruce Fitzgerald, Maribel Biamon, and Karelia Carbonell on behalf of the Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables.

A motion was made by Board Member Garcia-Pons, seconded by Board Member Rolando, to approve the Local Historic Designation of the property at 720 Madeira Avenue (legally described as Lot 7, Block 7, Coral Estates Section, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 19, at Page 7, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida) based on its historical, cultural, and architectural significance in accordance with Article 8, Section 8-103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code. This motion passed by the following vote:

**Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

2.     [24-8412](#)     CASE FILE LHD 2024-002: Consideration of the local historic designation of the property at **3519 Toledo Street**, legally described as Lots 18 & 19, Block 40, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Three, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 10, at Page 52, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Ms. Pernas read from the Staff Report as the PowerPoint presentation played on screen.

For the Property Owner:

Followed by a presentation by the Owner's representative, Mr. Zeke Guilford, Guilford & Associates and their Expert Witness, Mr. Steve Avdakov, Heritage Architectural Associates.

Letters of Support Received by Staff:

Jamie & Zully Pardo, Vicki Cerda, Ellen Dyer, Maribel Biamon, Bruce Fitzgerald, Daniel Ciraldo on behalf of the Miami Design Preservation League and Karelia Carbonell on behalf of the Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables.

A motion was made by Board Member Garcia-Pons, seconded by Board Member Banos, to approve the Local Historic Designation of the property at 3519 Toledo Street based on its historical, cultural, and architectural significance, specifically criterion number 4, exemplifies the historic, cultural, political, economic, and social trends of the community, architectural significance number one, portrays the environment in an area of history characterized by one or more distinctive architectural styles, specifically, Art Moderne and Mediterranean Revival and architectural number two, embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or period or method of construction based on the substantial competent evidence presented by Staff and particularly the second paragraph of the summary statement of significance. This motion passed by the following vote:

**Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

**7:00 PM - Break**

**7:09 PM - Meeting Resumes**

**VIII. SPECIAL CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS**

1. [24-8413](#) CASE FILE COA (SP) 2024-035 an application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **1200 Anastasia Avenue**, the Biltmore Hotel, a Local and National Historic Landmark, a lengthy legal description is on file in the Historical Resources Department. The applicant is requesting design approval for the demolition and reconstruction of the Gondola Building.

Ms. Pernas read from the Staff Report as the PowerPoint presentation played on screen.

On Behalf of the Applicant:  
Daphne Gurri, Gurrimatute

**Letters of Support Received by Staff**

Karelia Carbonell on behalf of the Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables

A motion was made by Board Member Garcia-Pons, seconded by Board Member Durana to approve the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 1200 Anastasia Avenue, the Biltmore Hotel, a Local and National Historic Landmark, for the demolition and reconstruction of the Gondola Building, including salvaging and reusing of any salvageable elements. This motion passed by the following vote:

**Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

2.     [24-8414](#)     CASE FILE COA (SP) 2024-037: An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **809 Coral Way**, a Contributing Resource within the “Coral Way Historic District,” legally described as Lots 12 & E 20’ Lot 13, Block 34, Coral Gables Section B, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The application requests design approval for the addition of an elevator at the rear.

Ms. Kautz read from the Staff Report as the PowerPoint presentation played on screen.

On Behalf of the Property Owner:  
Albert Rodriguez, Dalima Studio Architecture Inc.

A motion was made by Board Member Banos, seconded by Board Member Spain, to approve the design proposal for the addition and alterations to the residence at 809 Coral Way, a Contributing Resource within the Coral Way Historic District, legally described as Lots 12, 13 and 14, Block 34, Coral Gables Granada Section, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and approve the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness. This motion passed by the following vote:

**Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj



3.     [24-8415](#)     CASE FILE COA (SP) 2024-034: An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **1203 North Greenway Drive**, a Contributing Resource within the “Country Club of Coral Gables Historic District,” legally described as Lots 17 & 18 to 114, Block 4, Coral Gables Section E, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 8, at Page 13 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The application requests design approval for grey tinted glass windows.

**Applicant was not present.**

**A motion was made by Board Member Rolando, seconded by Board Member Silva, to defer this item to the January 16, 2025, Historic Preservation Board Meeting. This motion passed by the following vote:**

**Yeas:**   8 -   Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:**  1 -   Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

4. [24-8416](#) CASE FILE COA (SP) 2024-004: An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **3800 Granada Boulevard**, a Local Historic Landmark, legally described as Lots 112 to 114 & the South 20 Feet of Lot 115, Block 50, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Four, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 10, at Page 57 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework.

Ms. Kautz read from the Staff Report as the PowerPoint presentation played on screen.

For the Applicant:

Yasmin & Walter Gonzalez (Applicant/Owners)

Oscar Carrera, Architect,

Colin Brown, Landscape Architect

A motion was made by Board Member Spain, seconded by Board Member Banos, to approve with conditions 1 through 22 as noted in the Staff report, the design proposal for the addition and alterations to the residence at 3800 Granada Boulevard, and approve the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness, condition six, work with Staff to determine if the arched leaded glass on the front window is to remain, and condition thirteen, the metal roofs for the rear covered terrace and the semi-circular connector to the storage room cannot be copper, the stepped up roof needs to be studied, storage room addition at the front façade is to be lowered to be below the eve of the existing garage structure which is acceptable, that the proposed grading be further studied and that further clarification of the infill proposed at the arched entryway also be discussed with Staff. This motion passed by the following vote:

**Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

5. [24-8417](#) CASE FILE COA (SP) 2024-026: An application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **909 N Greenway Drive**, a Contributing Resource within the “Country Club of Coral Gables Historic District,” legally described as Lots 35 & 36, Block 32, Coral Gables Section B, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 5, at Page 111 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The application requests design approval for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework.

Ms. Pernas read from the Staff Report as the PowerPoint presentation played on screen.

On Behalf of the Applicant:  
William H. Arthur, Architect  
Michael Sheehan, Owner

A motion was made by Board Member Garcia-Pons seconded by Board Member Durana, to approve the design proposal for additions and alterations to the residence and sitework on the property located at 909 North Greenway Drive and approve with the conditions noted in the Staff report in addition to removal of the chamfer on the new addition, make it a single edge, and work with Staff to enlarge or re-think the window above the arch facing the front elevation and approve the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness. This motion passed by the following vote:

**Yeas:** 6 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Nays:** 2 - Board Member Alvarez and Board Member Banos

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

6. [24-8418](#) CASE FILE COA (SP) 2024-036 an application for the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at **2701 Indian Mound Trail**, a Contributing Resource within the “Church of the Little Flower Historic District,” legally described as ALL Blocks 6-6-A & 7, Coral Gables Section D, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 25, at Page 74 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The applicant is requesting design approval for the new construction of a one-story, approximately 19,123 square foot, multi-purpose building.

Ms. Pernas read from the Staff Report as the PowerPoint presentation played on screen.

For The Applicant:  
Suzanne Dockerty, J. Patrick Fitzgerald & Associates  
Michael Ehrling, Zyscovich Architects

A motion was made by Board Member Banos, seconded by Board Member Rolando, to approve the design proposal for the new construction of a one-story, approximately 19,123 square foot, multi-purpose building on the property located at 2701 Indian Mound Trail, a Contributing Resource within the “Church of the Little Flower Historic District,” legally described as All of Blocks 6-6-A & 7, Coral Gables Section “D,” according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 25, at Page 74, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve with the conditions in the Staff report one through seven and look at the detailing carefully and approve the issuance of a Special Certificate of Appropriateness. This motion passed by the following vote:

**Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Durana, Board Member Alvarez, Board Member Banos, Board Member Rolando, Board Member Spain, Vice Chairperson Silva, Chairperson Maxwell and Board Member Garcia-Pons

**Excused:** 1 - Board Member Cuervo Dunaj

**IX. OLD BUSINESS****X. NEW BUSINESS****XI. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

1. 2025 Meeting Dates - Meeting dates for 2025 will be on second and third Thursday of the month. Board Members may have an issue with Thursdays.
2. CMR - Board Member Rolando requested improvements to the audio visual and placement of screens.
3. Mediterranean Moderne - Board Members requested Staff to study this and clarify.
4. City Hall - Board Members requested Staff investigate the process for National Landmark Designation for City Hall. Is it possible for this to happen by the centennial.
5. TDR - Commissioners and the public are interested in expanding the TDR receiving and sending sites. Will discuss at the January meeting.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

This meeting was Adjourned at 8:59 PM.

**NOTE**

1 HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD  
2 VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT  
3 HYBRID FORMAT  
4 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2025, COMMENCING AT 3:00 P.M.

5 Board Members Present:  
6 Michael J. Maxwell, Chairman  
7 Alejandro Silva, Vice-Chairman  
8 Ana Alvarez  
9 Javier Banos  
10 Michelle Cuervo Dunaj  
11 Xavier F. Durana  
12 Cesar Garcia-Pons  
13 Margaret Rolando  
14 Dona Spain

15 City Staff and Consultants:

16 Anna Pernas, Historical Resources & Cultural  
17 Arts Director  
18 Stephanie Throckmorton, Deputy City Attorney  
19 Kara Kautz, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer  
20 Yvelisse Bonilla, Administrative Assistant/Board  
21 Secretary  
22 Amos Rojas, Jr., City Manager  
23 Jose "Joe" Gomez, Assistant City Manager

24 Also Participating:

25 Venny Torre  
Nati Soto  
Claudia Noval

1 THEREUPON:

2 (The following proceedings were held.)

3 \* \* \* \* \*

4 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. The first item is  
5 a City Commission item, Number 24-8422,  
6 Historic Preservation Board review of the  
7 window replacement proposal for the City Hall  
8 Complex.

9 Staff.

10 MS. PERNAS: If you can give me one second  
11 to join back on the Zoom, to get the  
12 presentation up.

13 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay.

14 MS. PERNAS: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

16 While we're doing that, we'll do a little  
17 bit of housekeeping. Does any Member of the  
18 Board have an ex parte communication or site  
19 visit to disclose at this time?

20 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Yeah. Yeah, I had a  
21 meeting with Staff to view the window  
22 yesterday.

23 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Very good.

24 MR. BANOS: I reviewed -- I didn't look at  
25 the windows out here, but I went with Staff,

1           probably a couple of weeks ago, and we looked  
2           at the existing windows outside City Hall.

3           CHAIRMAN MAXWELL:   Okay.   Very good.

4           MS. THROCKMORTON:   Mr. Chair, if I may,  
5           while Anna brings up the presentation, I just  
6           wanted to remind this Board and the public that  
7           this item is coming in a little bit of a  
8           different posture to you all than a normal  
9           Certificate of Appropriateness.

10          This Board adopted a motion about a year  
11          ago, which went to the City Commission and was  
12          adopted, that directs that any alterations to  
13          the City Hall windows, if they're going to  
14          proceed pursuant to Section 1-104 of the City  
15          Zoning Code, which I believe the Manager has  
16          elected to do, that those windows be presented  
17          to the Historic Preservation Board, with a  
18          Staff report on the alterations, for  
19          non-binding review and feedback prior to any  
20          public hearing held pursuant to that section of  
21          the Zoning Code.

22          So it's coming to you today not as a COA,  
23          but, rather, for your review and recommendation  
24          and feedback to the City Commission.   I think  
25          it would still be preferable to have a motion



1 from this Board one way or another, just to  
2 direct your feedback to the City Commission,  
3 but it's coming in a little bit of a different  
4 posture.

5 So I'm happy to answer any questions about  
6 that, but it will be presented to you by City  
7 Staff, as soon as we get that up.

8 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

9 MR. BANOS: Through the Chair, just to  
10 understand.

11 So what happens after it goes through here?  
12 It goes directly to the Commission or does it  
13 have a bi-way stop anywhere else?

14 MS. THROCKMORTON: So the Manager appears  
15 to be proceeding under Section 1-104 of the  
16 Zoning Code, that requires a public hearing at  
17 the City Commission for proceeding under that  
18 section. So there will be a public hearing at  
19 the City of Commission for approval of any  
20 alterations to the windows.

21 MS. PERNAS: I'm sharing my screen, but --  
22 if we could put the Zoom feed up.

23 All right. Thank you.

24 Anna Pernas, Preservation Officer.

25 I'm going to quickly review the Staff

1 analysis that I circulated to the Board and  
2 just have it on the record.

3 This is an application before you. Like  
4 mentioned before, the City Commission requests  
5 the Historic Preservation Board, a non-binding  
6 review and feedback of the window replacement  
7 proposal for the City Hall Complex.

8 The proposal includes the replacement of  
9 the existing wood windows with a steel window  
10 product by Hope's Windows.

11 Over the years, the building has undergone  
12 minor modifications and general repairs, but  
13 many of its original features remain, including  
14 the original wood windows and doors. The City  
15 is considering the replacement of these  
16 elements.

17 On September 6th, 2023, the City Commission  
18 passed a Resolution that any alterations to the  
19 City Hall Complex windows proceedings pursuant  
20 to Section 1-104 be done in consultation with  
21 the City's Historic Preservation Officer, and  
22 be presented to the City's Historic  
23 Preservation Board.

24 The original wood windows at Coral Gables  
25 City Hall are an integral part of the

1 building's Mediterranean Revival style. The  
2 windows are characterized by their wooden  
3 frames, divided light patterns and large size,  
4 allowing natural light into the building.  
5 These elements contribute significantly to the  
6 building's architectural appeal and historic  
7 integrity.

8 The intent of the proposal is to replace  
9 the windows -- the wood windows with a steel  
10 window product that would replicate the  
11 existing windows and type configuration and  
12 operation. To ensure compliance with the  
13 Secretary of Interior standards for  
14 rehabilitation, any modification of original  
15 wood windows and doors at City Hall should be  
16 carried out in a manner to protect the  
17 building's historical and architectural  
18 integrity. Before replacement is considered, a  
19 thorough evaluation of the current windows  
20 should be conducted to determine their  
21 condition.

22 Today, we have Nati Soto and Claudia Noval  
23 from -- I'm going to butcher the firm's name --  
24 to talk to you about the process of choosing  
25 this window and -- they have a short

1 presentation for you.

2 MS. SOTO: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm  
3 Nati Soto, with Ferguson, Glasgow, Schuster,  
4 Soto, FGSS. We will be rebranding soon to be  
5 able to make it easier for everyone. We are at  
6 901 Ponce de Leon Boulevard. And with me is  
7 Architect, also, Claudia Noval, who has been  
8 working with the City, to assist them in this  
9 process.

10 So we were asked to assist the City, in  
11 review of the existing condition -- a brief  
12 review of the existing conditions and options  
13 that would be available to improve the  
14 conditions, because the windows are not in good  
15 shape. Some of them are literally falling  
16 apart, as we found in our project that we're  
17 doing on the Third Floor, where one of the  
18 contractors opened the window, and it --  
19 basically, it didn't want to close anymore, it  
20 didn't want to exist anymore.

21 So we looked at several options of what  
22 could be done here. First option was,  
23 obviously, restoring the existing windows. The  
24 sashes, with custom profiles to match what's  
25 there, finishes, again, consistent with what

1 would be a historical study of what the  
2 original colors were, so that we could  
3 replicate it as much as possible.

4 The frames would be repainted -- repaired,  
5 then repainted in the field, hardware repair,  
6 and -- if possible. A lot of it is no longer  
7 there. And we would be consistent with the  
8 existing items.

9 Obviously, there is pros and cons to that.  
10 The pros is, obviously, that it retains the  
11 exact aesthetic and material properties of the  
12 existing historical building.

13 And we also considered the possibility of  
14 converting to fixed sashes, instead of operable  
15 windows, as requested, so for energy  
16 conservation reasons, and we decided that that  
17 wasn't really what was appropriate for the  
18 building. Obviously, the main con is that it's  
19 not a hurricane resistant product, so it leaves  
20 the building vulnerable to hurricane forces  
21 from any storm.

22 And what's happening is that the windows  
23 require bi-annual maintenance to treat and  
24 prevent rot and damage, and even if we  
25 evaluated and fixed as much as possible, to

1 make them resistant to wind forces, they would  
2 never be brought up to meet the current wind  
3 pressures from the increasing hurricane forces.

4 Also the windows do require annual painting  
5 and sealing. There's a limited amount of  
6 window restoration companies in Florida,  
7 unfortunately, and we reached out to one,  
8 that's very well-known, and we've had some  
9 difficulty getting feedback, because they know  
10 it's only -- not an immediate need. So that is  
11 one of the challenges as to getting the windows  
12 repaired.

13 Then, we also looked at the possibility of  
14 leaving the thing as it is and repairing the  
15 windows and providing -- using the shutters.  
16 Right now, the shutters that are there are  
17 attached to the stone facade. They're really  
18 not meeting the wind pressures for the negative  
19 wind pressures and would likely fly off, Number  
20 One. Number Two, it takes the City, I think  
21 they said, three days -- long -- more -- up to  
22 three days to put whatever products that  
23 they've had stored. They need to get a company  
24 out, with a lift, et cetera. So there's some  
25 increasing challenges to that, because the

1 storms have been not as clear in their path as  
2 they used to be. So there is the challenge of  
3 when to come out, how to mobilize that  
4 protection right away. And, obviously, the  
5 shutters are not really embedded structurally,  
6 to prevent them from flying, to resist the  
7 current wind forces.

8 Another item that was explored was interior  
9 storm windows. Basically, a combination of  
10 repairing the existing windows, once an  
11 assessment was made as to what the exact  
12 position is and condition of each of the  
13 openings, and what had needed to be done there.  
14 So the option was to install storm windows on  
15 the interior.

16 To do so, it would be similar to -- to the  
17 procedure of putting a new window, which is the  
18 existing structure around each window needs to  
19 be reinforced, because the building is built  
20 out of primarily terracotta, and that needs to  
21 be reinforced for any attachment of any product  
22 that would withstand the hurricane forces.

23 So, for that particular purpose, obviously,  
24 you have to go through the same process of  
25 reinforcing the existing building. The

1 interior is obviously affected, because you  
2 have to take off what's on the inside. We can  
3 try to save it or restore and try to save some  
4 of it, but it's a big challenge, and then put  
5 everything back exactly the way it was, either  
6 with new materials or such. So the cost of  
7 that would be extensive. And, obviously, the  
8 aesthetics of the interior, it would be obvious  
9 that there's a storm window inside, Number One.  
10 Number Two, you would no longer have the  
11 benefits of an operable window, that you could  
12 open the window, if necessary, for whatever  
13 process.

14 And then the obvious other con is that the  
15 regular annual and bi-annual maintenance of the  
16 exterior windows would still be necessary, and  
17 the interior storm window also provides some  
18 unusual conditions to the interior of the wood,  
19 because it's basically sealing the gap. That  
20 gap that's created between the wood window and  
21 the storm window need to be treated in a  
22 certain way, and the windows operated very  
23 often, so that those gases and things that  
24 form, the heat that forms in that cavity,  
25 doesn't destroy the restored window.



1           So then the --

2           MR. BANOS:   Would the Chair allow for a  
3           question on this point or do you want wait for  
4           her to finish the --

5           CHAIRMAN MAXWELL:   I'm sorry, let's wait  
6           until the presentation is over, please.

7           MS. SOTO:   I would appreciate it.

8           So then the next -- the next step was to  
9           say, okay, what does it take to replace windows  
10          here?  So we looked at aluminum windows, we  
11          looked at wood windows, and we looked at steel  
12          windows, all three with impact and hurricane  
13          force resistant products, South Florida  
14          approvals or local Miami-Dade County Notices of  
15          Approval.

16          There were various products that we looked  
17          at, and what we did is, we analyzed the  
18          profiles and what could be done with those  
19          products, within their approval process, that  
20          would allow to basically have the aesthetics of  
21          the existing windows, but also the impact  
22          resistance.  And of those, we saw that the  
23          Hope's products could be customized by applying  
24          moldings and such to the exterior, made of  
25          steel, as well, so that they would -- the look,

1 the aesthetic would -- and the profile of the  
2 window section would be matching as closely as  
3 possible to the existing wood windows. And  
4 that's what we -- that's what this sample is.

5 This is, obviously, a work in progress.  
6 That sample that you've seen outside, that is  
7 almost there, but it's not totally inclusive of  
8 all of the extrusions and moldings that are  
9 planned for the project, if it goes through,  
10 because there's only so much material that's  
11 available, without extruding the exact shapes  
12 that are necessary for that finished product.

13 So that's what I've got for you guys.

14 Ana, any other questions or things you want  
15 to cover?

16 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

17 Mr. Banos, you had a question?

18 MS. PERNAS: Did you want to go over the  
19 proposal with them, the section -- sorry that  
20 my internet is not -- I'm disconnected, so it  
21 cut off the presentation to go over the  
22 section, but -- if not, we can take discussion  
23 maybe now while this is getting restarted.

24 MS. SOTO: It was in the package. It was  
25 in the Board package.

1 MS. PERNAS: Yeah, they all have it. Once  
2 I get back up, I can put some photos on.

3 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. Mr. Banos, you  
4 have a question? Then, for those Board  
5 Members, just raise your hand and let me  
6 recognize you, if you would, please.

7 MR. BANOS: It wasn't clear to me, when you  
8 did this explanation, what's the difference  
9 between functionally and monetarily? Don't you  
10 have to reinforce the structure anyway, to put  
11 in the window that you have out there?

12 MS. SOTO: Yes.

13 MR. BANOS: So why would -- the  
14 reinforcement that you would have to do to put  
15 an internal shutter, okay, why would that be an  
16 impediment, if you have to do the reinforcement  
17 anyway?

18 MS. SOTO: It's not. It's the same  
19 process. The only -- the big difference that  
20 you're adding between the steel new window --  
21 impact window and the storm shutter is  
22 basically the cost and the viability of  
23 restoring the existing windows.

24 MR. BANOS: Right, but it would be a  
25 truer -- it would be a true restoration of the

1 existing windows, because you will not be  
2 getting rid of them? Like they would be  
3 maintained there. You would have to, you know,  
4 do whatever essential work is necessary in  
5 order for some of those windows to be restored  
6 to what they're supposed to be, replacement of  
7 the wood in some areas, et cetera, but the  
8 original windows will be kept, and then you  
9 would have hurricane protection from the  
10 inside, and if -- do they give the same level  
11 of protection when it comes to -- in the  
12 commentary by the Commission sometimes, and  
13 I've heard it from Staff, I understand that  
14 there's some issues with humidity and -- would  
15 that give the same protection if the shutters  
16 would be put inside or would it be different?

17 MS. SOTO: Well, structurally, it's a  
18 similar process.

19 MR. BANOS: Okay.

20 MS. SOTO: You have to attach the product  
21 to a substrate that's going to handle the  
22 structural conditions.

23 MR. BANOS: So it would --

24 MS. SOTO: From a structural standpoint.

25 MR. BANOS: So it would have the same

1 benefit of giving the building the general  
2 protection from the outside elements, it would  
3 just be an internal shutter, right, as opposed  
4 to -- I mean, it has the added benefit, with  
5 the expense, I understand, but with the added  
6 benefit that we can keep the original windows  
7 on the building?

8 MS. SOTO: Well, the likelihood is that if  
9 there's a hurricane that would pass the area, a  
10 large amount of those windows would get sucked  
11 out and damaged.

12 MR. BANOS: Well, a couple of issues with  
13 that statement there.

14 MS. SOTO: Okay.

15 MR. BANOS: The building has been there  
16 since what time, 19 what?

17 MS. SOTO: We've been very lucky. Since  
18 1925.

19 MR. BANOS: So, I think, you know, it can  
20 probably withstand another hurricane, and --  
21 plus --

22 MS. SOTO: I don't know.

23 MR. BANOS: -- if we so desire, we can  
24 always put the same protection that we have  
25 stored, we can put it outside, to protect the

1 windows themselves. This would just be an  
2 internal protection so there's nothing else to  
3 be there.

4 I'm trying to achieve a goal, where some of  
5 these windows, I mean, they may have wood rot  
6 or things like that, but the windows  
7 themselves, you know, they're original Florida  
8 pine. That's a very resistant type of wood.  
9 And, then, it's a beautiful window out there,  
10 but it's not the original window. It doesn't  
11 have all of the moldings. It doesn't have --  
12 it changes, in my view, the view of the  
13 building, but that's just an opinion.

14 I just want to ask the question  
15 specifically, structurally you would have to do  
16 the same work, to replace the window than to  
17 put the shutter internally, right?

18 MS. SOTO: Okay. Structurally, to protect  
19 the interior of the building and the roof,  
20 structurally, it's a similar situation.

21 MR. BANOS: Okay.

22 MS. SOTO: Obviously, any damage to the  
23 windows and the exterior created by the damage  
24 to the windows, would not be protected at all.

25 MR. BANOS: Okay. That's it.

1 MS. SOTO: And to be honest with you, I'm  
2 not sure -- the assessment hasn't been done yet  
3 as to whether those are Dade County pine  
4 windows. I don't believe they are.

5 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Ms. Rolando.

6 MS. ROLANDO: I have a couple of questions  
7 about how you ended up selecting the steel  
8 window. I've had, in a historic home --

9 MS. THROCKMORTON: Can you please speak  
10 into the microphone a little closer? Sorry.

11 MS. ROLANDO: I've had steel windows and  
12 they rust and rust together and require annual  
13 maintenance, as well, and I've also had wood.  
14 And you have -- you've presented us with the  
15 steel option. Is that -- what kind of coating  
16 or what is the anticipated maintenance on that?

17 And then you also showed a possibility of a  
18 wood window, that, to me, the texture and the  
19 appearance, if you're recommending replacement,  
20 should we be considering a like kind  
21 replacement?

22 MS. SOTO: Okay. The wood window -- the  
23 wood window products that we explored, that  
24 have impact resistance, the profile of the sash  
25 and the frame was much wider.

1 MS. ROLANDO: Okay.

2 MS. SOTO: So the existing windows have a  
3 pretty narrow profile for a wood window, which  
4 is very nice, and the new windows -- the new  
5 wood windows are much wider in the profile.

6 The finish, I know, Claudia, you know about  
7 it a little bit better, it's like a twenty-year  
8 paint finish.

9 MS. NOVAL: For the wood windows or --

10 MS. SOTO: No, the metal.

11 MS. NOVAL: It would --

12 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Please speak into the  
13 microphone.

14 MS. NOVAL: Ten year -- sorry. For the  
15 finish, I think the ten years is what the --  
16 for the finish.

17 MS. ROLANDO: So the finish on the steel  
18 windows comes with a ten-year guarantee?

19 MS. NOVAL: I believe so.

20 And to Nati's comment, when we -- the  
21 one -- I believe there's only one wood window  
22 product available, and it was the one that we  
23 listed, and that one, they -- in order to keep  
24 the Florida product approval, they can't make  
25 them any thinner. So it would substantially



1 change the light in the building, in the  
2 window.

3 MS. SOTO: They also were hesitant to apply  
4 any of these very unique pieces that make the  
5 City Hall windows, like the bottom trim, the  
6 drips and such, they -- I mean, their new  
7 windows they don't have that at all, and they  
8 would not participate in altering any of that.

9 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. Ms. Alvarez.

10 MS. ALVAREZ: Did you explore other wood  
11 manufacturers, because I know of a few others  
12 that make an effort to copy the exact profiles  
13 and --

14 MS. SOTO: We explored the ones that had a  
15 product approval -- product approval and we  
16 were not able to identify anything with that  
17 narrow profile on the sashes.

18 MS. SPAIN: You might want to give them  
19 names of companies.

20 MS. ALVAREZ: Is that appropriate? So I'm  
21 not sure if this is applicable, but a few years  
22 ago I attempted to use Hope's Windows on  
23 another project, and back then, the frames came  
24 from the manufacturers, somewhere up north, but  
25 the glass was installed here.

1 MS. SOTO: Yes.

2 MS. ALVAREZ: So it created some issues,  
3 you know, with the contractor, you know, how do  
4 they --

5 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Ana, please speak --  
6 there you go. Very good. Much closer.

7 MR. DURANA: -- and warranties, et cetera.  
8 Do you know about that or is that no longer  
9 applicable?

10 MS. SOTO: I know that the window product  
11 is a long-term warranty. Whether they still  
12 have difficulties, you know, I have not heard  
13 that. I have not heard that.

14 MS. ALVAREZ: Okay. So I was thinking of  
15 other projects in the City that, you know, have  
16 had the windows replaced. So I can think of  
17 the Merrick House. So, in that case, maybe  
18 Staff could speak to that, how that was done.  
19 That has the storm panels and the original  
20 windows restored.

21 MS. KAUTZ: The windows were restored and  
22 we kept the panels.

23 MS. ALVAREZ: One last question. So if you  
24 did have to reinforce the structure on the  
25 existing windows, whether you do replacement or

1       some storm paneling system, do you have an idea  
2       of what that detail looks like? Do they have  
3       to do some kind of cavity to reinforce or --

4           MS. SOTO: No. We have -- we do have an  
5       idea. I know that -- what -- what we've done  
6       on the third floor is, the perimeter of the  
7       window has been carved out, and we are  
8       enforcing installed, and then it was filled  
9       with grout.

10          MS. ALVAREZ: Was that done without  
11       damaging interior finishes or --

12          MS. SOTO: Oh, no, all of the interior  
13       finishes were removed. On the Third Floor --

14          MS. PERNAS: No, the interior finishes are  
15       remaining on the Third Floor. They cut the  
16       plaster around the trim of the existing  
17       opening.

18          MS. KAUTZ: The windows, yeah.

19          MS. SOTO: Yeah, not the -- the window  
20       itself was not -- is still in place. It's  
21       still there. It's like floating in this  
22       crevice. Actually, it's been done, so it's not  
23       a crevice anymore.

24          MS. NOVAL: The entire perimeter of the  
25       window is -- on the Third Floor, the entire

1 perimeter of the windows have been reinforced,  
2 but the window, in essence, they're still  
3 there, even the sill, the molding. They were  
4 able to just -- what has been removed is  
5 basically the wall finish around the window  
6 box, let's call it.

7 MS. SOTO: Yeah.

8 MS. NODAL: And that's how they reinforced it.

9 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay.

10 MS. ALVAREZ: Okay.

11 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Are you finished, Ms.  
12 Alvarez?

13 MS. ALVAREZ: Yes. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. Mr. Durana.

15 MR. DURANA: For me, I mean, I'm pretty  
16 much okay with replacing the windows, if the  
17 existing windows are in bad condition. My only  
18 concern is what Peggy brought up, is the steel,  
19 'cause it will eventually rust. I mean, I  
20 don't know -- you know, if we could maybe find  
21 a little bit better on the warranty and what  
22 they do or what type of maintenance is  
23 required, because I know that that could be a  
24 problem, but I understand that the steel ones  
25 are the ones that have the best profile, you

1 know, to mimic the original ones, I think.

2 But that's something that we've got to  
3 consider, 'cause that could be a maintenance  
4 issue later down the road.

5 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Ms. Spain.

6 MS. SPAIN: I just have a couple of  
7 questions.

8 First of all, on process, whatever we end  
9 up with, the recommendation to the City  
10 Commission, when is that going to the  
11 Commission? I mean, is that something that  
12 is --

13 MS. THROCKMORTON: That's a question for --

14 MS. SPAIN: -- you don't need to do  
15 anything else and you'll just take it to the  
16 Commission?

17 MS. THROCKMORTON: It's a question for City  
18 Staff and the City Manager. There's no timing  
19 requirement in this process that's happening  
20 here today, but --

21 ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER GOMEZ: Good  
22 afternoon, Mr. Chair, Vice Chair and Honorable  
23 Board Members. Joe Gomez, Assistant City  
24 Manager for the City of Coral Gables.

25 Our intent would be to bring this to the

1 Commission either in January or February of  
2 2025.

3 MS. SPAIN: Okay. So from what I'm  
4 hearing, there hasn't been any type of study  
5 done as to the condition of the existing  
6 windows. Are you planning on doing that,  
7 before January or whatever it is? Because, I  
8 mean, that was in the report and that's what  
9 they've said. So you really don't know what  
10 condition these windows are that you're wanting  
11 to take out, that have been there for a hundred  
12 years, what condition they're in.

13 Yeah, one of them may have fallen apart,  
14 but one of them may be okay and we really don't  
15 know that now, right?

16 MS. PERNAS: No complete window assessment  
17 has been done unit by unit.

18 MS. SPAIN: All right. So I believe that  
19 should be done, if we're talking about removing  
20 them. That's my first comment.

21 And, also, you said that there had to be a  
22 bi-annual window repair, if you put in the --  
23 if you restore these windows. Is that what  
24 we --

25 MS. SOTO: That's what we -- is recommended

1 for wood windows.

2 MS. SPAIN: Okay. That's not something  
3 that's being done now, right?

4 MS. SOTO: No. Bi-century, you know. I'm  
5 sorry. Yeah. No, it's not being done.

6 MS. SPAIN: Okay. So --

7 MR. BANOS: You got it right.

8 MS. SPAIN: You know, that may not happen.

9 And, also, I really think that it's  
10 important, whether these windows are restored  
11 or replaced, that we figure out what the  
12 original paint color was.

13 MS. SOTO: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: I do, too.

15 MS. SPAIN: And that's very simple to do.  
16 Companies do that.

17 MS. SOTO: Well, we've had sampling done  
18 recently and it's been sent to the lab.

19 MS. SPAIN: Okay.

20 MS. SOTO: So there may be some surprises.  
21 We're excited about that.

22 MS. SPAIN: I know there was on the  
23 Biltmore.

24 MS. PERNAS: Yeah, she was there last week  
25 or the week before for that.

1 MS. SOTO: Yeah.

2 MS. SPAIN: And I brought up those interior  
3 storm shutters at a previous Board Meeting, but  
4 I don't think necessarily they need to be  
5 permanent. I mean, just like someone goes  
6 around on the outside, which is terrifying to  
7 watch, I have to say.

8 MS. SOTO: It is.

9 MS. SPAIN: I had my office in City Hall at  
10 one point, and the guys walking along in those  
11 ledges, putting up the panels, were terrifying,  
12 but if they're on the inside, they could easily  
13 be removable, and it would not take three days  
14 to put up one panel, because I do appreciate  
15 you saying the humidity in that gap, between  
16 the shutter and the window, might be a problem  
17 for the wood.

18 MS. SOTO: Yeah.

19 MS. SPAIN: But I don't see how it would be  
20 -- I don't think it would be difficult to just  
21 have a removable panel on the interior, and so  
22 when the -- you know, and I'm thinking one  
23 panel, you know, so they don't have to -- but  
24 whatever, so they don't have to spend a lot of  
25 time, so that we can still restore the windows.



1           I don't know. The windows -- and,  
2           actually, if you do that, you can restore the  
3           windows little by little. You can put the  
4           panels on the interior -- removable panels on  
5           the interior, and so every storm that comes,  
6           okay, fine, you put it up, but then you can  
7           take your time and put it in multiple -- you  
8           know, it may take ten years in the budget to  
9           actually do a restoration of windows, but I  
10          would suggest that that's what we have --

11           MR. GARCIA-PONS: So did you want an answer  
12          to that?

13           MS. SPAIN: What?

14           MR. GARCIA-PONS: The last part.

15           MS. SPAIN: No. I wasn't expecting one.

16           MR. GARCIA-PONS: So I think I understand  
17          how the City arrived at this suggested  
18          alternative, but I do have a couple of  
19          questions as to how we got there.

20           So my first points are going to be Dona's  
21          points, which is the thorough evaluation. I  
22          think it's premature to say we're going to take  
23          out all of the windows and replace them with  
24          steel, when we don't know, and I wouldn't be  
25          able to vote on it, to do that, without that

1 information. So I understand the urgency of  
2 the matter, as well, but I would urge the City  
3 to please do that first.

4 And, then, once we know what the extent of  
5 the problem is, then craft a solution. I think  
6 we're trying to craft a solution prior to  
7 having all of the information, which is  
8 difficult for me.

9 I also tend to agree with Dona's  
10 suggestion, but before it gets there, I think  
11 it's a question for the City, but I don't know  
12 if the architect wants to answer. It is,  
13 what's the impetus, what's the number one  
14 priority for the window replacement, not  
15 seventeen priorities? But the number one  
16 priority for the window replacement at this  
17 time is, what?

18 MS. SOTO: I don't know. If you want -- I  
19 certainly could tell you what mine is, but it's  
20 yours.

21 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Because there's lots of  
22 them.

23 MS. SOTO: Yeah.

24 ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER GOMEZ: The  
25 replacement of the windows, it's integral to

1 the long-term viability of the building. We're  
2 going to enter into a full-term assessment and  
3 restoration and rehabilitation of City Hall, so  
4 it hopefully can last another 100 years.

5 It's important that that structure be as  
6 sealed and as air tight as possible, as  
7 moisture tight as possible, in order for that  
8 structure to continue on in its glory for the  
9 next 100 years. That's why it's imperative  
10 that -- at least from an engineering  
11 perspective, and I'm just going to speak as an  
12 engineer, because, again, I'll defer to the  
13 architects and to the Historic Preservation,  
14 but as an engineer, my job is to protect that  
15 asset as best as I can, and I know that if we  
16 replace the windows with windows that are  
17 hurricane rated, that structure has a much  
18 better chance of surviving long-term than if  
19 not.

20 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Okay. Thank you. I  
21 imagined that was the priority, because all of  
22 the alternatives were hurricane proof,  
23 hurricane rated, hurricane, hurricane,  
24 hurricane, and I'm not sure -- we know that  
25 that building is not a shelter. It's not going

1 to have people in it during a hurricane. We  
2 already have an EOC, which is probably what  
3 this building was built for.

4 So understanding, I think the phrasing that  
5 you mentioned of, we're trying to protect the  
6 building for the future and air tight is  
7 important, and that is different to me than a  
8 hurricane. So, I think, if you're trying to  
9 protect the investment that the City is going  
10 to make on the interior, I think we could all  
11 agree that humidity plays a factor, and I'm  
12 pretty positive that those windows leak like  
13 crazy, but they were designed to, at that time,  
14 because, back then, it was passive, as opposed  
15 to, seal, seal, seal, which is what we do  
16 today.

17 And I think that's where the conflict comes  
18 in, at least for my role on this Board, which  
19 is Historic Preservation, the original intent  
20 of those windows were to be operable and to  
21 match the aesthetic of what Coral Gables was in  
22 the 1920s, and we are so fortunate that they  
23 are still there today, that it is painful to --  
24 particularly without a thorough evaluation, to  
25 say, "Hey, we're going to do our best. We're

1       going to take them out. We're going to try to  
2       make them steel and move it forward."

3               We, as a Board, often -- or we know that  
4       having a historic property may require more  
5       maintenance, right, for everybody, not just the  
6       City, for the private owners, for everyone that  
7       has these buildings, and we know that the  
8       bi-annual maintenance is going to be a  
9       requirement, and I know that the City has their  
10      priorities, with budgets, and these -- you  
11      know, governing is difficult, but from the  
12      perspective of this Board, I think our priority  
13      is to give you advice based on what we think is  
14      best for the historic nature of the City and  
15      this particular building.

16             And this particular building, being City  
17      Hall, like this is the marquee building,  
18      almost, to me, in front of the Biltmore. The  
19      Biltmore is a beautiful building, but this is  
20      our civic building.

21             I just took a moment to read, as the  
22      meeting was starting, as provided by Staff in  
23      the report, the National Park Services Historic  
24      Preservation Tax Incentive for Replacement  
25      Windows Standards, and all of the bullets on

1 the front page talk about replacement windows  
2 on primary street facing, replacement windows  
3 on the low areas, replacement of existing  
4 windows material for material, wood for wood,  
5 metal for metal. It's really specific. It  
6 also refers back to the fact that we should  
7 have a thorough evaluation of the problem, and  
8 we currently have windows that haven't  
9 disintegrated.

10 So I think there is a conflict, and, again,  
11 I understand why -- I think -- I believe I  
12 understand why the City is moving in the  
13 direction that they're moving, but I think  
14 there are alternatives that can do both, and I  
15 think Ms. Spain's alternative of sealing the  
16 building in a different fashion, and then  
17 protecting the windows, as possible, should be  
18 further considered.

19 And it may cost more money, and it may take  
20 more time, but we, as a City, what are our  
21 priorities? And I can only speak to my  
22 priorities, and this Board can only speak to  
23 our priorities, the City has other priorities,  
24 and the City's going to have to do what they're  
25 going to have to do, but I think it's incumbent

1       upon us to make our priorities known,  
2       particularly, in this particular way.

3               The solution of an interior sealant,  
4       whether it's permanent, as the architect has  
5       mentioned, is -- we're going to have to redo  
6       the framing anyway, and we're going to have to  
7       seal it, seal those things in, to make it  
8       airtight, that, I think, addresses what  
9       Mr. Gomez mentioned earlier, the hundred  
10      percent sealing of the interior for protection  
11      of drying the air, right. That is one  
12      solution.

13             The solution of putting it up when a  
14      hurricane comes in, temporarily solves the  
15      hurricane problem, and not the sealing problem.  
16      So if -- that's why I asked what the number one  
17      solution was?

18             MS. SPAIN: Can I comment on that?

19             MR. GARCIA-PONS: Sure.

20             MS. SPAIN: I don't think it's always a  
21      good thing to absolutely seal historic  
22      buildings. We had all kinds of issues with the  
23      Merrick House, and I personally have had issues  
24      -- I lived on Santa Maria Street, on a hallow  
25      clay tile structure, and I put in hurricane

1 proof windows in that, because they were awning  
2 windows when I first moved in. Peter Iglesias  
3 was essential in that process, and so was Manny  
4 Lopez. I have -- kudos to them. They came  
5 over and we figured out how to fill this house,  
6 but once they were put in, it was hermetically  
7 sealed and it was a huge problem.

8 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Uh-huh.

9 MS. SPAIN: So I don't know that it's a  
10 good idea to necessarily really seal that  
11 building, but go ahead.

12 MR. GARCIA-PONS: And I don't know about a  
13 hundred percent, and you can't do it. I'm sure  
14 there's -- there's mechanical engineers for  
15 that. I'm not one of them. And I think that's  
16 sort of half the point.

17 The second point is -- following the  
18 priorities is, technologically, we can rebuild  
19 that window, right? We can. It's the 21st  
20 Century. Of course we can rebuild that window.  
21 It's just a matter of time and money.

22 So it may be a question for any contractor  
23 that might be on the Board is -- or in the  
24 audience, are there craftsman available in this  
25 country that can rebuild a wood window to match



1           that, in your opinion? Do you know?

2           CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Absolutely. We're  
3           getting it in the Congregational Church.

4           MS. PERNAS: Yeah.

5           MR. GARCIA-PONS: So, again, I think there  
6           is an opportunity --

7           MS. SOTO: If you want to take it further,  
8           that will meet the conditions of Procurement of  
9           the City of Coral Gables.

10          MR. GARCIA-PONS: But that's up to the City  
11          of Coral Gables.

12          MS. SOTO: It's not like your house.

13          MR. GARCIA-PONS: That's really up to the  
14          City of Coral Gables, right. We make our own  
15          rules, right. If it's a priority to the City  
16          to do this, they can do this. It's not written  
17          in stone.

18          MS. SPAIN: Doesn't the Procurement Code  
19          have -- there's a clause in there that talks  
20          about Historic Preservation and that they can  
21          waive the process?

22          MS. PERNAS: Yeah. They have special  
23          exemptions for restoration, but, again --

24          MS. SPAIN: And conservation.

25          MS. PERNAS: -- there's ways to work the

1 Procurement Code, if that were the case, if we  
2 needed an out of state. It wouldn't be easy.  
3 I'm not saying it's going to be easy, but --

4 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Those of us that have  
5 worked in government know that if there's a  
6 will, there's a way, and I think there -- if  
7 there's a will, there's a way. So I think the  
8 City should do the thorough evaluation, before  
9 proceeding, please, and then possibly entertain  
10 another alternative, if one comes out of this  
11 Board, to evaluate as an alternative, and think  
12 about what are the City's priorities with  
13 regard to this civic building and the face that  
14 we show the world who we are.

15 And we've had this debate over other  
16 landmark items, which are difficult. I'm not  
17 going to conflate the two. But it is an  
18 ongoing debate. And at some point, if we just  
19 keep on giving in to, these things are  
20 expedient to be done this way, we're going to  
21 lose the heart and character of what things  
22 are. And I know it's a fine line, because we  
23 replace windows all of the time in private  
24 residences. Things change, we replace kitchens  
25 and bathrooms, things change over time, but

1       this is so special, I think it would merit some  
2       consideration.

3               The last sort of comment -- sorry, this is  
4       all comments, not questions -- the last comment  
5       is, in the Park's comment, in the Park's notes,  
6       they do talk about prioritizing window  
7       replacement and not every window needs to be  
8       replaced in kind. So the primary faces, the  
9       one closest to the people, the one in the major  
10      rooms. So maybe the windows facing the parking  
11      garage are different, right. I don't know  
12      this, because I'm not going to identify what  
13      are the priority windows and what aren't the  
14      priority windows, but I know for sure that the  
15      windows in the Chambers, those are pretty  
16      spectacular, on that curve, right.

17             There are some things that could really  
18      kept there, as identifying elements that could  
19      be preserved forever, and it doesn't have to be  
20      all -- however many windows are at the  
21      building, and that's it. Thank you.

22             CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

23             Mr. Silva.

24             MR. SILVA: Thank you.

25             I agree. I think Cesar said it perfectly,

1       so I'm not going to repeat his comments. I do  
2       appreciate, Ms. Soto, the work you did, and the  
3       work with the new window and trying to match it  
4       as close as possible. I think, if you look at  
5       the side by side comparison, I think it's -- if  
6       we are to go with the replacement route, I  
7       think this is maybe a viable option.

8               I did want to add something to Cesar's  
9       comments, I guess, on the sealing of the  
10      building. If that is the number one priority,  
11      I don't want us to be hyperfocused on the  
12      windows, because the entire building -- it's an  
13      envelope, right. If we're proposing to replace  
14      these windows --

15             MR. GARCIA-PONS: I don't think we should  
16      put words into Mr. Gomez's mouth. He said,  
17      protection of the building, which included the  
18      sealing. I don't want to --

19             MR. SILVA: Understood. Understood. But I  
20      don't want to hyperfocus on sealing these  
21      windows a hundred percent, when the rest of  
22      this building, we all know, is a porous  
23      building, right. It has cladding. It has  
24      gaps. And I know there's a project coming  
25      along to restore it, but, you know, those walls

1       were meant to weep in some way, and maybe it's  
2       not a bad thing that these windows weep out,  
3       you know.

4               The thing has to be looked at as an  
5       envelope in its entirety, and I think  
6       hyperfocusing on just the windows, without  
7       looking at the entire wall system, is maybe a  
8       mistake, and that's why I would echo the  
9       request for kind of an overall analysis of the  
10      existing windows, and which ones are bad, which  
11      ones are really bad, and maybe that will give  
12      us some clues, right. Maybe it's windows that  
13      are protected on the south facade or whatever  
14      it is, and then we can start looking at -- not  
15      at a whole replacement, but selected or we  
16      start identifying tiers of windows that maybe  
17      could be replaced.

18             I mean, I think we need to look at this a  
19      little more carefully, because this building is  
20      so special to our City.

21             CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: I'm going to pick up  
22      where my colleagues have left off and ask the  
23      question, are the doors going to be replaced?

24             CITY MANAGER ROJAS: Amos Rojas, Jr., City  
25      Manager. I think the first thing -- the first

1 step for us, for the City to do, is do a  
2 complete evaluation, not only of all of the  
3 windows, like you said, before we bring it to  
4 the Commission, is to also do the doors, 'cause  
5 the doors do have some damage, and I may be  
6 able to answer it a little bit more specific as  
7 to which doors are in worst shape, but I  
8 believe that -- and I'm not sure which Member  
9 said it, we will do a complete evaluation of  
10 the doors and windows, and then we'll schedule  
11 it for a Commission Meeting, once you all have  
12 had an opportunity to look at the  
13 documentation.

14 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you.

15 Has there been a study -- a cost benefit  
16 analysis on looking at these various options?  
17 We know that one cost is -- for all them, is to  
18 remove the windows, and then to also, you know,  
19 cement the inside, so that storm windows can be  
20 there.

21 Is there a range of cost and a cost  
22 analysis that's been looked at?

23 CITY MANAGER ROJAS: As I said, we're here  
24 today to get the feedback, and I'm making my  
25 notes here as to the comments that you all are

1 making on this. I do agree that, before moving  
2 forward, we will do the evaluation, and then,  
3 you know, we'll see where we're at.

4 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: And how far are we from  
5 selecting an architect?

6 ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER GOMEZ: That was  
7 approved at the December Commission Meeting.  
8 We have selected the consulting firm that will  
9 be doing the assessment and then eventually the  
10 design for the rehabilitation and restoration  
11 of the building.

12 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: So are you expecting the  
13 architect to do the assessments to specify the  
14 windows?

15 ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER GOMEZ: It's --  
16 yeah. The lead of the team is an architectural  
17 firm. It's Heisenbottle that was selected.  
18 The team also has Douglas Wood's firm as the  
19 structural engineer, who has been intimately  
20 involved with the structural repairs to the  
21 building for many, many years, and we also have  
22 a conservator that's part of the team, as well.

23 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: So we're really not in a  
24 huge hurry to make this decision whatsoever.

25 I'm going to make a couple of comments.

1 Thank you very much.

2 And I'd like to begin by saying that this  
3 is -- the building that we have in front of us,  
4 our City Hall, is very much like your  
5 grandfather's gold watch, the one that has 24  
6 jewel movement, that was beautifully machined  
7 by craftsman and people who have made, you  
8 know, wonderful watches, that sell for very  
9 expensive sums of money. But in order to maybe  
10 be a little more convenient, we're thinking of  
11 taking out all of those -- that beautiful  
12 clockwork inside and replacing it with a  
13 battery operation.

14 The Coral Gables City Hall is one of our  
15 City's most iconic buildings. It's on the  
16 National Register of Historic Places. It is  
17 eligible and should be and I hope it would be  
18 very soon, a national landmark, like the  
19 Biltmore. This building is unique. It's  
20 survived not only a hundred years, with the  
21 same windows, but the windows haven't been  
22 painted since Les Bailenson was the consulting  
23 architect to the City, when they were painted  
24 green, and that was about 20 years ago or more.  
25 And that was when Mr. Bailenson discovered that



1       they were green through a chemical analysis of  
2       the original painting, rather than white.

3               Windows, as we all know, are one of the  
4       most important architectural elements of a  
5       building, and, therefore, you know, we need to  
6       take extra time, rather than rushing this, or  
7       coming to a pre-determined decision. You know,  
8       those windows have lasted a hundred years,  
9       through lots and lots of hurricanes. There are  
10      multiple examples of this.

11             I understand that a set of windows like  
12      this will run in excess of maybe \$25,000 or  
13      more for one window. That's a pretty  
14      staggering sum of money. I restored the  
15      Opa-locka City Hall a number of years ago, and  
16      had all of the windows rebuilt, you know. My  
17      church, right now, is looking at restoring and  
18      rebuilding its windows, and they're wood, too.  
19      And by the way, there's probably not more than  
20      a half a dozen windows -- historic buildings  
21      from the '20s that still have their wood  
22      windows in here.

23             This is not a residential building. You  
24      know, we don't have the option of saying, "I  
25      want to do this because it's more convenient to

1 me." Our brand, as a City, is history. We  
2 sell that. We tell everybody. All you have to  
3 do is go on our website and we tell you that it  
4 is.

5 So the Secretary standards are very clear.  
6 Those standards are the same as our City  
7 standards. We need to make sure that we follow  
8 our standards and our Code and meet up to the  
9 obligations of which we, as a City and  
10 citizens, have stated that we believe in, that  
11 is our brand, and what it is that we all aspire  
12 to.

13 We can have a real teaching moment with  
14 this building, and I hope that we do. I hope  
15 that we bring in craftsmen. I hope that we  
16 bring in all kinds of people to showcase to the  
17 world not only our willingness to restore this  
18 building properly, but to show people how to do  
19 it. I think that's essential.

20 With that, I think that there's really no  
21 real urgency to this, and I would urge you to  
22 urge the City Council to slow down and to get  
23 the studies done and whatever you do, don't  
24 have an MAI direction. Don't have it made as  
25 instructed. Let us come up, altogether, as a

1 City, to determine the best possible way to do  
2 this.

3 MR. BANOS: Mr. Chairman, will you allow a  
4 question of the City Attorney?

5 CITY MANAGER ROJAS: Can I make a comment?

6 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Go ahead.

7 CITY MANAGER ROJAS: Everyone, from the  
8 Commission, down to myself and to the Staff, we  
9 all understand the need to preserve the history  
10 of the City of Coral Gables. We understand  
11 that, and I don't want to give the impression  
12 that we're just going to, let's just replace  
13 the windows. It's just easier to throw in new  
14 ones. We looked at many options, as you heard  
15 the architect explain, but I just want you to  
16 know that we, too, feel that need -- that when  
17 we do it, we need to do it right, and we are  
18 concerned.

19 During the budget year, this year, my first  
20 priority in the budget was historical sites,  
21 because I saw that there was a lot of  
22 historical sites -- not a lot, some of them,  
23 that needed tender loving care. Now, with  
24 that, comes money.

25 So when we talk about restoring the Water

1 Tower or some of the other -- Venetian Pool,  
2 you know, it costs money, but I just want you  
3 to know that when we talk about doing repairs  
4 or doing work at City Hall, we also keep in  
5 mind the history of Coral Gables and what it  
6 means to us that work and live here in the  
7 City.

8 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you, Mr. Manager.  
9 We really appreciate that.

10 Mr. Banos.

11 MR. BANOS: I just had a question for the  
12 City Attorney.

13 So I don't want to let go of his question,  
14 because, I think, to the Chairman's point and  
15 the point of Mr. Garcia-Pons and the rest of my  
16 colleagues, we don't have the information in  
17 front of us to truly be able to provide the  
18 response and the educated recommendation that  
19 the City is asking of us.

20 The Manager has just conceded that --  
21 giving our feedback, that he believes that we  
22 need to do a study of the windows. So wouldn't  
23 it be advisable, instead for us to do -- give  
24 any recommendations, so we can keep the  
25 jurisdiction that has been allowed by that

1 Ordinance, that we have to give our  
2 recommendation before anything is done, that we  
3 table or defer the item until we have that  
4 information, so this thing doesn't move along  
5 the line and gets to a void, so that we can  
6 continue to have the influence on the debate,  
7 okay, and receive the information from the  
8 Manager, and then, after that, once we have it,  
9 then provide an educated reflection as to what  
10 should be done based on that, and then, and  
11 only then, have the matter move forward to the  
12 City Commission?

13 MS. THROCKMORTON: If the applicant, who's  
14 the City today, is proffering that they will  
15 return to this Board and will seek your  
16 recommendation then, that's certainly fine and  
17 we can defer the item until that date, but I  
18 would ask that the applicant confirm that, that  
19 they will be returning and we'll defer any  
20 decision making on that, on behalf of this  
21 Board, until that date.

22 CITY MANAGER ROJAS: Well, it's funny,  
23 because I asked that same question in regards  
24 to, had we done all of the window evaluations  
25 yesterday, which is when I found out we had

1 not. I think it's -- Mr. Banos' suggestion is  
2 correct, and we're willing to go back, let's  
3 gather the information that we have there,  
4 we'll include the doors, as well, because I  
5 think that's a very integral part of what we're  
6 doing, and then we'll come back for feedback to  
7 the Board.

8 MR. BANOS: Given that proffer, I will move  
9 to defer the item until we have that  
10 information.

11 MR. GARCIA-PONS: Through the Chair, before  
12 we defer it, I would like to ask City Staff and  
13 possibly the consultant, whether it's within  
14 their scope or not, to take into consideration  
15 the comments that were made on the Board today  
16 as to, if the results come in as A, B or C,  
17 these may be the alternatives that we could  
18 proceed with, so it's not all or nothing. That  
19 would be my recommendation. Thank you.

20 ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER GOMEZ: Absolutely.

21 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. We have physical  
22 agreement from the Manager and the City -- Vice  
23 Manager.

24 ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER GOMEZ: Absolutely.

25 MS. THROCKMORTON: So with that in mind --

1 CITY MANAGER ROJAS: I'll put it on the  
2 record. Yes, sir, that's fine.

3 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. Thank you, sir.

4 MS. THROCKMORTON: -- the Commission  
5 Resolution directed that this item come for  
6 non-binding review and feedback prior to any  
7 public hearing, but I'm hearing from the  
8 Manager's Office that they're not going to  
9 consider this that review and feedback pursuant  
10 to the Resolution until they return with the  
11 additional information.

12 CITY MANAGER ROJAS: That is correct.

13 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you, Manager.

14 MR. BANOS: I should move to defer and the  
15 motion should make reference specifically as to  
16 what Ms. Throckmorton just said, and it should  
17 reflect in the motion that it is being done,  
18 the Manager's proffer, that this item -- that  
19 this will not be considered that opinion, that  
20 is under the current Resolution, that we have  
21 not yet provided that input.

22 MS. THROCKMORTON: That's how I understand  
23 the motion, that this item will be deferred for  
24 that additional information about the windows  
25 and doors to be provided by the City, and that

1       it will not proceed to the Commission until  
2       further review by this Board.

3               CHAIRMAN MAXWELL:   So we have a motion.   We  
4       need a second, please.

5               MR. GARCIA-PONS:    I'll second.

6               CHAIRMAN MAXWELL:   We have a second -- we  
7       have a motion by Mr. Banos, and we have a  
8       second by Mr. Garcia-Pons.

9               MS. THROCKMORTON:   Mr. Chair, if I may.   I  
10       know we don't necessarily need it, but I don't  
11       know if we have any public comment on this  
12       item, but I just wanted to make sure that that  
13       was --

14              CHAIRMAN MAXWELL:   Can we take the motion  
15       first -- before and then we can receive  
16       public --

17              MS. THROCKMORTON:   We have a motion and a  
18       second.   I would prefer, if we're going to take  
19       public comment, that we take it before the  
20       vote.

21              CHAIRMAN MAXWELL:   Very good.

22              Also, do we have any kind of public comment  
23       that has come in the mail or by other means?

24              MS. PERNAS:   Yes.   We did receive a public  
25       comment letter from Karelia Carbonell, on



1       behalf of the HPACG, that was circulated in  
2       advance of the meeting. That's the only one  
3       that we received digitally.

4               And, then, if there's anybody in-person or  
5       in Zoom that would like to speak, please go  
6       ahead.

7               MR. GARCIA-PONS: And through the Chair, I  
8       think that the letter from -- that Anna just  
9       mentioned was actually really clearly written,  
10      so if it's online, I would encourage anybody to  
11      read it.

12              MS. PERNAS: Yeah. We will attach it to  
13      the agenda, with the minutes.

14              CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Okay. Mr. Torre, would  
15      you like to come up?

16              MS. THROCKMORTON: For the record, please  
17      state your name and address, anybody who's  
18      going to be speaking today. Thank you.

19              MR. TORRE: Good afternoon. Venny Torre,  
20      208 Andalusia. Thank you for letting me speak.

21              So I concur with the majority of you that  
22      this is one of the most significant  
23      buildings -- it is the most significant  
24      building in this City, and with all of the  
25      regulations, all of the demands that we put on

1 folks, I think it's a bad example not to do  
2 what's right, which I think may be to look,  
3 really hard, keeping those original windows, if  
4 at all possible. I think that would be the  
5 first try.

6 A couple of things that were said earlier,  
7 that caught my at attention, one was that the  
8 folks that do restoration, and I think there's  
9 one major group in town, had not either had the  
10 time or the ability to look at them. I would  
11 think that that should have been taken further,  
12 and determine whether some other folks out  
13 there could do this, either nationally or  
14 internationally, because I think that -- that  
15 either -- you can send them to somebody here or  
16 we can put them on a ship and send them to  
17 Italy, and I'm sure, somebody that does work in  
18 Venice, can bring them back beautifully painted  
19 for us. I'm sure that's available, probably  
20 for a good cost.

21 And the second thing is that, if you were  
22 to really pursue the impact resistant window,  
23 there may be a one time inspection -- or one  
24 time approval for a window that may not be a  
25 Marvin, it may not be a Luxbaum, but could be

1 something completely different, that may meet  
2 the design criteria that you guys may wish. So  
3 that may be an option, and that's something  
4 that I did not hear. But I think that could  
5 also be explored, if, in fact, that's the route  
6 that the City would like to take.

7 The Hope's Windows are top of the line. I  
8 just don't know that that's the right solution  
9 at this point. Possibly later, but at this  
10 point, I think, like you said, the breathing of  
11 the building and all of that, is not really a  
12 major concern, at least as far as I'm  
13 concerned. The continuing or the keeping of  
14 those windows, I think should be really thought  
15 through. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Thank you, sir.

17 Is there any other public comment that  
18 people would like to make, a statement?

19 All right. Well, hearing none, then we'll  
20 go back to the motion and Resolution.

21 Would you call the roll, please?

22 THE SECRETARY: Sure.

23 Ms. Alvarez?

24 MS. ALVAREZ: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Durana?

1 MR. DURANA: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Okay. Ms. Rolando?

3 MS. ROLANDO: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: Ms. Spain?

5 MS. SPAIN: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Silva?

7 MR. SILVA: Yes.

8 THE SECRETARY: And Mr. Maxwell?

9 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Yes.

10 MR. GARCIA-PONS: It's a yes from me, too.

11 MR. BANOS: And a yes from me, as well.

12 It's my motion. He seconded.

13 THE SECRETARY: Apologies.

14 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: All right.

15 MR. BANOS: It's all right.

16 CHAIRMAN MAXWELL: Mr. Manager, Mr. Vice  
17 Manager, I would like to thank you very much  
18 for your time, for your patience and for  
19 listening to us and for bringing this issue to  
20 us. As we all know, we love this City, all of  
21 us do, and that's why so many people are here  
22 today.

23 Mr. Torre, thank you. Your professional  
24 opinion is always highly appreciated.

25 So let us move forward, in the spirit of

1 cooperation and working together. I think that  
 2 we can find a solution that meets all of the  
 3 criteria that we have in our Code and all of  
 4 the criteria that we have in our hearts, and  
 5 that's the most important thing I think that we  
 6 can do.

7 We have a beautiful City. Let's push it to  
 8 the next hundred years. Thank you, sir.

9 \* \* \* \* \*

10 (Thereupon, the meeting was concluded at 9:00  
 11 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

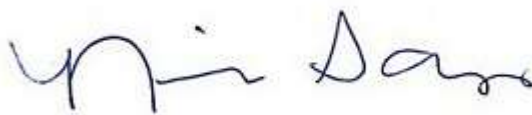
STATE OF FLORIDA:

SS.

COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE:

I, NIEVES SANCHEZ, Court Reporter, and a Notary Public for the State of Florida at Large, do hereby certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

DATED this 6th day of February, 2025.



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NIEVES SANCHEZ