

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting

Agenda Item D-1

June 1, 2010

City Commission Chambers

405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II

Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.

Commissioner Maria Anderson

Commissioner Rafael “Ralph” Cabrera, Jr.

Commissioner Wayne “Chip” Withers

City Staff

City Manager, Patrick Salerno

City Attorney, Elizabeth Hernandez

City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman

Deputy City Clerk, Billy Y. Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Mari Gallet, Executive Director of the Business Improvement District

Brad Rosenblatt, President of the Business Improvement District

John O’Rourke, Vice-President of the Business Improvement District

Judy Weissel, Business Improvement District, Board of Directors Member

Wayne Eldred, Business Improvement District, Board of Directors Member

Helena Ulloa, Business Improvement District, Board of Directors Member

Jose Bolado, Business Improvement District, Board of Directors Member

D-1 [Start: 09:33:00 a.m.]

Report on the Activities of the Business Improvement District

Mayor Slesnick: OK. If there is no objection, I am going to go out of order here, we have a full delegation from our Business Improvement District and we are going to go to that next, so we are going to go to Mari Gallet. Is it Gallet?

Ms. Gallet: Gallet.

Mayor Slesnick: Gallet, wow.

Commissioner Cabrera: Very good, Viva la France.

Ms. Gallet: Thank you Mayor, it rhymes with ballet, so it is Gallet.

Commissioner Cabrera: Ballet, Gallet.

Ms. Gallet: Thank you very much, I appreciate the time here today and I would like to bring up our President Brad Rosenblatt, resident and property owner and also retailer, and also our Vice President is here today John O'Rourke, he is our Vice President, he is also the owner of Montica Jewelry and we are going to take the presentation and you will hear from each of us. I am going to go out of order because I have a slide on our Board of Directors, but I would like to introduce our Board, those members that are here today. We have Wayne Eldred, from Tarpon Bend. Helena Ulloa, she has had her store on Miracle Mile for 14 years. Judy Weissel, she is a property owner and founding member of our organization, and Jose Bolado sixty-eight years on Miracle Mile. Let me say that again, oh...since sixty-eight (1968), I am sorry. I haven't had enough coffee this morning.

[Laughter]

Ms. Gallet: And a third generation retailer Jennifer Hornik, who it is now, Jennifer Johnson. Thank you all for coming so very early, I really appreciate it. We have a presentation we brought with us today. The Business Improvement District fondly referred to as The BID, is a self-taxing district, which means the property owners and merchants of Miracle Mile tax themselves to form this organization. It was created originally in 1997, and its mission is a dual mission of marketing and advocacy, and I will tell you a little bit about what that means. We represent about 300 retailers and restaurants in the District and about 120 property owners. Our charter has a sunset provision every five years, which means that we go out of business every five years, and the only way we get reinstated is when the members vote us back in. Which means we have now been re-elected twice in 2002 and 2007, at which time we expanded the district to include Giralda at the urging of our restaurants on restaurant row. Just to give you an idea of what the annual assessment is, those folks on Miracle Mile pay \$0.47 per square foot of ground floor space and those off Miracle Mile are at \$0.38 per square foot, which is a twenty percent discount. Here is our district map, I hope you can see this, everything in yellow is part of the district, which is LeJeune to Douglas our main street which is Miracle Mile, one block south Andalusia and two blocks north to Giralda. Here is our full list of Board of Directors, other than those who are not here today, we also have Abe Ng from Sushi Maki, Michael Wurster, the General Manager of the Westin Colonnade, Anabella Smith, who sits on our board for the Chamber and also our Liaison with your Commission, Commissioner Maria Anderson, which I want to take the time to thank judiciously coming to all of our board meetings and being a great advocate for us. Just to give you an idea of our Budget, our revenues are about \$792,000 of which \$752,000 is in assessments. We spend almost half a million dollars each year in marketing to promote Coral Gables exclusively, that includes TV commercials, newspaper print, radio, online, all of the things that we do to promote Coral Gables. We also spend about \$25,000 per year to streetscape, actually we spent more than that last year and you will hear a little bit from John about that, and finally we have a partnership with the City to light and decorate the downtown during the holidays of \$25,000. Downtown Coral Gables mentioned in the media whenever you hear about it, is typically as a result directly of our efforts. We have spent about \$2 million in the last five years which generates hundreds of millions of dollars in paid and unpaid impressions, and I will tell you a little bit about them in a second. This pie chart shows you the difference between, the pink, which is public relations and unpaid media, and paid media and the

change...you know it was nice to see those students up here winning the awards in new media, and there is a lot of emerging media and the BID stays abreast of all of those, whether it be online, PR, Facebook, twitting, you will see that in a second as well. This is a perfect example of a partnership that goes back to 2004, the BID has been purchasing media in magazines, in flight, on American Airlines, since 2004, and many of those things lead to obviously these efforts that we have with American Airlines. Here is an example of one of our ads. We reach about 3,000,000 passengers every time we advertize, which we are in every issue of Celebrated Living, Enjoy Wealth, we are also doing Nexos. Here is just a slew of the many things that we do. Nationally and regionally, we are not only in American Airlines. We are also in Florida Travel and Leisure, we are part of the GMCVB's books, locally we do billboards, newspaper, we are on Gables Home Page, our promotions include "Coral Gables Restaurant Week", which I'll remind everyone, this Friday is our kick off at Taste of the Gables, Giralda Under the Stars, our Holiday Promotions and Taste of the Gables, those are directly underwritten by the BID. The Kiosk that you see on Miracle Mile, those are managed by us and include posters from our merchants, this is a snap shot of our page, we recently re-launched our shopcoralgables.com. I encourage everyone to visit it. And here is an example of one of our merchants on our page this is Red Koi Restaurant. We built the system now where are merchants can update their own websites on their own, which is very exciting. This is our Facebook presence, we have over 3,000 fans right now and also on twitter we have plenty of folks and tourist that follow us. We update folks on news on promotions, everything from an author at Books and Books, to promotions like Restaurant Week. Here is a copy of one of our outdoor billboards, this is co-op with our merchants, this is one of our restaurant boards and we like to claim that we are the official foodie district, now that we have about 70 restaurants; and finally here are some pictures from Carnival on the Mile. We take advantage and partner with the Kiwanis and do our sidewalk sale; and as you can see our merchants bring their tables out and we do a brisk business for our merchants. Again our third annual Restaurant Week starts June 7th, and we will launch it this year again with a "Taste of the Gables" in the Villa, next to Tarpon Bend. Here are some pictures from last year; and finally in the area of P.R., I think it is important to note that we retain a full time public relations agency, so 100 percent of the time is dedicated to efforts leading to that, and I'll ask everyone to pick up a copy of this week's Miami Today. There is a great article in here about our growing stores and restaurants and we are really proud to be working on a lot of those partnerships. Just last year we had over 30 million media impressions and P.R. We hosted 20 journalists to the area thanks to our partnership with the GMCVB, and just to note our recent pitching efforts have led to broadcast print or online results consistently every month for the last year. Here are some examples of our efforts, here is Florida Travel and Life Magazine which did a four page spread on Coral Gables, and Women's Wear Daily listed us as one of the emerging retail districts in South Florida. At this point I would like to turn it over to Brad.

Mr. Rosenblatt: Thank you very much. One of the things I wanted to talk about today was where we spend some of our tax dollars on dressing up the downtown area, and one of the things that we began in 2007, was the downtown banner program, and here is a picture of Don and Jose Bolado, was the president at the time, I think that was our first launch of the banners and these are some various executions and we put them up throughout the year, with the help of the Parks Department to promote different things going on, whether it is the holidays, whether it is summertime, or whether it is the Farmers Market; and since we began that in 2007, we have

spent \$17,000 or \$18,000 to date on that program. Something else that we do quite a bit, hopefully a lot less frequently in the years to come, but we put wraps on the store fronts and the coming soon signs; and years ago it used to kind of be this ugly white paper or people could put brown paper and; now whenever you see a store front that is under construction or waiting for a new tenant to sign up to start construction, we wrap this store fronts; and just to give you an idea once again from November of 07, which is when we began our re-election for this particular five-year period, we spent about \$60,000 on this store wraps and the coming soon signs. Something else we have spent a lot of time and energy in working with the City, during this five year period we are spending \$125,000 in holiday décor for the holidays, sometimes is banners, sometimes is wraps, here are the palms on Miracle Mile. This year we are going to be doing a new program, which we are very excited about, which will be coming back to you guys a little later on, but to encourage all of the stores to light their particular facades as well. So we hope to continue to make downtown a good environment for the holidays; and finally one of the things we have spent a lot of money doing over the past couple of years is the centralized valet program; and since we began this program in 2006 we typically parked about 30,000 on the Mile from about 15 meters, and we have spent a little over \$50,000 originally a lot of that money was meant to underwrite the program when it wasn't yet self-sufficient, and also advertise it and promote it; and then one of the things we did right around the holidays last year, was we worked with the providers of the centralized valet to get them to create a program for visitors that are disabled that are coming to our City and we had a little trial program that we came and discussed with you. I believe we will be coming back to you in the summer meeting, but we have been having continuous meetings with the valet providers, and we are going to look to extend that temporary program through Christmas of this year, so we can monitor it and see how that goes; and those are some of the things that we have been working on to make the downtown prettier and make it more exciting for the people to come by; and I know John who is the incoming chair of the Coral Gables Chamber, which we are very excited about, is going to talk about a little bit about streetscape and some of the other things that we have been working on.

Commissioner Cabrera: Mr. Rosenblatt, before you leave your presentation, I just have a quick question relating to the store front signage program. I know you all do a phenomenal job with it, so first and foremost I want to thank you, Mari and your staff and the board for their fine work. In doing so, is this a program that every merchant in the BID needs to implement?-or every property owner in the BID needs to implement, while their store is vacant.

Mr. Rosenblatt: Well actually from a Code purpose, if the stores are vacant, they have to be covered, the wraps go on the outside, so our involvement in bothering the property owner or getting them to let us come inside is very minimal. Basically, from time to time we take perusal of what stores are vacant, and if someone doesn't tell us, then we go out once or twice a month and we put up new wraps on the outside of the stores, but of course you know some property owners are a little more bit proactive and they say, listen my tenant is moving out, can you please put a store wrap on.

Commissioner Cabrera: So you actually do that.

Mr. Rosenblatt: Not Mari herself, but we do outsource to a company and they come and they put up their wraps and again, we pay for that, so it is a minimal inconvenience for the stores.

Commissioner Cabrera: Is the Merrick Garage considered part of the BID? It is, I suggest you contact the City of Coral Gables and see if they'll cooperate with the BID and put up the covering on the Bijan property, because it is derelict, it is embarrassing, it is shameful and I know it has nothing to do with you all.

Mr. Rosenblatt: Mari will go out this afternoon herself, to make sure.

[Laughter]

Commissioner Cabrera: I mean here you all have put together a phenomenal program to beautify kind of a difficult situation, which it is, because the store front is open and we endorse it, and we recommend it, and we commend you for it, and yet we can't seem to get it done ourselves. So I strongly urge the City to become proactive in this manner and specially at the Bijan site. Thank you.

Mr. Rosenblatt: Absolutely. Thank you.

Mr. O'Rourke: OK. We can go back to the slides please. Great, let's talk a little bit about streetscape, the first thing I want to remind you all is think about the word Business Improvement. The keyword here is improvement, Business Improvement District; and I think what we have just talked about here is all the wonderful things we do on a consistent basis to keep our downtown vibrant, and to market it and to advertise it. When we look at the downtown area at this time, it is kind of looking at that beautiful house that you have enjoyed for many, many years and maybe the roof is leaking a little bit now and you have patched it up, time and time again and you fixed the bathrooms, and we have gotten to a point now, when now you need to do some major work, some major renovation. So what we have done is we have taken some seed money, about \$78,000 to date as you can see, and we have invested it in trying to create a vision for our downtown district, to get the ball rolling if you will, to be able to turn that back over to the leaders and the visionaries of our City, and we have done that by way of providing a public information campaign, public workshops, we have worked with consultants, we have put together some beautiful collateral materials and we have actually even created some 3D's renderings, and here you see a kind of an idea or our vision, our temporary vision of what we see the downtown district becoming. When you look at it all great leaders, have one thing in common and that is vision, not only do they have vision they have the courage to see that vision through and to make it a reality; and when I think of Coral Gables, I think of George Merrick, and I think of the vision that he had, and what he has created and what has been done to this day. The BID acts really in much of the same way, it represents a variety of property owners, merchants and those guests that visit us and bring us that much needed revenue, that provides us with our livelihoods, as well as helping us to advance our community. So let's move on to the next slide. Let's talk a little bit about retail recoupment and the BID. The BID does a huge part of advocacy, if you will, and advocating the revitalization of the downtown district and it has done so over the past four years. We really look forward to working with City in regards to that,

and one of the things that we do is we provide a very valuable service by way of retail recruitment. If you look at us as a clearing-house if you will, Mari is contacted on a regular basis from commercial real estate brokers and retailers that want to come into the area. Actually, that is how I met Mari. I was one of those who had done business in the Gables for many years and wanted to relocate to the Miracle Mile area, and she was very instrumental in assisting me with that. The other thing that the BID does is, it manages a vacancy list, which ties into that clearinghouse. Let's move on to the next slide. I want to talk a little bit about Seasons 52, but before I do, I want to share something with you and I call it the pull brand, and the push brand. Seasons 52 is what we call a pull brand and to give you some examples of the pull brands, these are brands that pull people into our downtown district, whether it is from the existing office buildings, the people that come in everyday that are working there, that are coming down and dining and shopping and staying for the day or the people that are coming at night. When you are thinking of pull brands, think of Tarpon Bend, Houstons, Barnes and Noble, AT&T, Starbucks your major pull brands. The thing that makes Miracle Mile so unique is that we have a variety of push brands as well. You have Jose Bolado, Wolf's Wine, Jay's Jewelers, you have Razzle Dazzle, where some of us get our hair done, and Seasons 52 is another strong pull brand, that are so crucial, this mix between this pull brand and this push brand. Seasons 52 is going to be opening up in the 300 block. Why is that so important? Well think about how substantial they are, they have 14 locations when they open up, and when they finish their opening here and in Tampa, six of those will be here in Florida. We reached out to their President Steven Judge, and wanted to know from him what were some of the things that were key with regards to bringing on Seasons 52, and this is what he had to say "working with the BID in Coral Gables has been a tremendous source of information and help in enabling 52 to understand and navigate the dynamics of the local market, this is extremely important to us and our efforts to be a forward thinking, socially responsible restaurant," and that is from Steven Judge who is the President of Seasons 52. He sees the vision. So many people that move into the downtown district see the vision. We as a City need to embrace that and see that vision, and make that a reality.

Commissioner Cabrera: I love the subtle photograph of the parallel parking.

[Laughter]

Commissioner Cabrera: Very subtle, very subtle, but very nice, very nice indeed.

Commissioner Anderson: I love the building.

Mr. O'Rourke: I will tell you Commissioner Cabrera, it will be wonderful, looking at jobs. I mean in an environment where we need jobs, is to bring construction jobs into the area, that restaurant when it opens will have 120 people employed by it. They have 300 seats, we are looking at anywhere, the range that they provide, or they anticipate is anywhere between 2,000 to 4,000 seatings per week, depending on the seasonality. That is huge, that is a tremendous revenue, and that is the right kind of mix that we want brought into the area. Now you have heard a lot this morning, we have talked about all the different things the BID does, many of us have seen David Letterman over the years, well we have the Mari Gallet list for the BID's top

10, so let's run down the top 10 things that we think that we do here. Are you ready? So number 1. We bring journalists to Coral Gables.

Mr. Rosenblatt: Number 10 John.

Mr. O'Rourke: I am sorry number 10, yeah David Letterman is not going to hire me. Number 9, creating and promoting flagship events for Coral Gables. Number 8, dressing up downtown Coral Gables. Number 7, promoting an upscale brand voice for Coral Gables. Number 6, developing award winning ad campaigns promoting Coral Gables. Number 5, making the downtown more accessible for valet as well as disabled individuals. Number 4, lighting the downtown during the holidays. Number 3, buying advertising to promote Coral Gables. Number 2, recruiting businesses to come to Coral Gables, and the number 1 focus of the BID is proactively looking to the future to ensure a vibrant downtown. Mari.

Ms. Gallet: Thank you John, I would like to if I may Mayor, invite a couple of our Board Members up to say a couple of words.

Mayor Slesnick: Yes.

Ms. Gallet: Come on up, Judy, Helena.

Mayor Slesnick: Your estimation, 10 minutes is not accurate, but is OK.

Commissioner Cabrera: Light agenda.

Ms. Weissel: My name is Judy Weissel, property owner.

Mayor Slesnick: Hi Judy.

Ms. Weissel: How are you today?

Mayor Slesnick: Welcome back.

Ms. Weissel: Thank you for allowing us to make our presentation. Since the BID's inception, we have worked diligently to create a strong partnership between the BID and the City. It is not surprising that we have become a model for other Business Improvement Districts throughout the United States. Our annual meeting in November highlights the accomplishments and presents our goals for the upcoming year. I am hoping that the streetscape project that the City and the BID have been working on will succeed. We will bring much needed vitality to our area, and showcase the partnership that exists between the BID and the City and create that jewel and that miracle and beyond on the Mile. Thank you.

Mayor Slesnick: Thank you.

Commissioner Anderson: Thank you Judy.

Ms. Gallet: Do you have any questions?

Commissioner Anderson: It is always a pleasure to attend your meetings, you all have a great group of people that really want the best for the downtown and for Coral Gables; and over the years, I have had the opportunity to see your reach, really broaden and deepen and so I know that the interest of Coral Gables is at the heart of what you do and you are forward thinking people, and it is always a pleasure to be with you and to be your representative.

Commissioner Cabrera: The genesis, if I recall bringing you back, and I share all of Commissioner Anderson's comments about having you and be a vital and important part of our downtown area, but I believe the genesis, or the reason that you came here today, had a lot to do with an informal discussion that this Commission had several weeks back, relating to ways to beautify the Mile, by I think the discussion had something to do with pressure cleaning, and then we got into our own personal discussion of what was the role of the BID, and I have always understood the role of the BID, because I had the honor and privilege to serve with Judy Weissel and Jose Bolado and Bruce Hornik and a host of others as a founding members of the BID. Tell me how that all fits in?-because I don't want people from two meetings ago, to think somehow that it is your responsibility to go out there and pressure clean the sidewalks, so, what are some of the things that we could be doing with you to help improve the general streetscape as it is today. So that we don't have these miscommunications or misunderstandings.

Ms. Gallet: Well as you saw in our presentation, our budget is relatively small and there is a very clear cut function and mission to the district, so to answer your question no, the pressure cleaning is not something that falls under the realm of what our responsibility is, and in the past the City always...the City has great Public Works folks and we work very closely with them and they have typically a quarterly schedule of pressure cleaning. Unfortunately, with some of the cuts and some of the things that have gone on, they have lost staff, and a lot of this happens at night. So whenever we cut into some of the staff, that is typically what happens, so I think, especially as a result of that meeting we have been working closely with the City to try to see how we can bring that back and have it occur more frequently. You know the sidewalks are very old, they have not been remodeled in 30 years and we really hope that the streetscape project comes to fruition because this is one of typically the problems with repair maintenance. Actually, kudos to Public Works, because not only have they lost staff for cleaning, but they are also having to do more maintenance; and when I reach out to them the folks that are responsible for pressure cleaning are also responsible for mending cracks, and if you walk it right now there is a lot of new staff, new cracks and new cement that is having to go down.

Commissioner Cabrera: How does that work? How does that work?-because I am really curious, when you have, the fact is that all three of you, all of you that are sitting in the audience and are up here, know the Mile and the BID quite well because I see you walking the area constantly, so what is the mechanism when you find something that is deficient or in need of repair or cleaning? How does that work? And excuse me for wanting to drill down, but I want to know. I think it is important that we understand this.

Ms. Gallet: We call Public Works, just like a resident would if there is a crack, if there is something, excessive flooding, for example one of the biggest problems we have and we will have it today, is that there is going to be flooding and we have to Public Works, they have to come out and clean out the drains, because the infrastructure does not support these kinds of rains anymore. I can tell you and I would be remiss if I didn't mention this all of our shopkeepers are responsible for cleaning their storefronts, and I guarantee you that everyone in this room you have seen at one point or another if you come early enough, sweeping, cleaning. Some of them go the extra mile folks like Tarpon Bend, Montica, and Houstons, if you see their sidewalks they are specially brilliant, because they actually pressure clean.

Commissioner Cabrera: They are immaculate. Those three enterprises, if you do walk the Mile, you see the difference right then and there. My question is how do we get the rest of the store owners, property owners to emulate what Montica, and Tarpon Bend and Houstons are doing?

Ms. Gallet: They are doing it, again because they keep their storefronts clean, whether it be brooms, we have to be very careful with what cleansing supplies they use, because they can be cited if they use something that is too strong, and that is always a struggle you know. We had one guy who was cited because they were using bleach, but at the end of the day, if we can just get, those quarterly pressure cleanings back, I think they would serve to really support this area.

Commissioner Cabrera: Commissioner Kerdyk you brought this item up, and if I recall your commentary, you had asked the Manager's office for some sort of either an update or request of pressure cleaning parts of the Mile.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Right. The fact is that we all sit up here trying to make the City of Coral Gables the best place to live, sometimes we focus on the residential section, sometimes we focus on the commercial section, I think each of you would concur, nobody knows the commercial section better than myself. I walk it, I own property there and when I walk it and see it not looking great, I bring it up in front of the City to make sure that we try to pay special attention to that location. When I brought it up to the Commission at the last meeting, or two meetings ago, to me when I walk down the sidewalks of Miracle Mile and I see gum and I see dirt and I go back to the parking lots behind Miracle Mile and I walk in there and I see dirt and grime everywhere, we need to collectively figure that out; and we are all in this as a team, this is team Coral Gables, whether it is team Coral Gables on our side, or team Coral Gables on your side, so that is all this was, it was "Hey listen," can the City do the pressure cleaning?-if not, let's see if the BID can assist us in doing that. I didn't want the BID to take over the cleaning job. We just want to make the City of Coral Gables shine, and the City Manager has informed me, that they have gotten back onto the routine. Is that correct Mr. City Manager? Maybe you want to comment.

City Manager Salerno: Certainly Commissioner, Public Works crews have done approximately 25 to 30 percent of the Mile already. They stated that it should be done within the next month or so. They do it largely on the weekends from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. in the morning when it is free of traffic, so they are doing more with less. As you know Public Works took a substantial loss in staffing last year and we are actually doing that work on comp time, meaning they will take other

time off because they are working during the week. They get that time and the best time to do it that they have determined is on the weekends. I know the BID is aware of that in that timeframe. So they are moving right along on it and it should be looking as good as it is going to look until there is a significant improvement from a capital perspective to the roadway. When it rains like this, 25 percent to 30 percent of the streetscape project is for drainage improvements, those issues will remain until there is an investment in the millions of dollars to the Mile area. That is part of that the BID and the City hope to accomplish with the downtown strategic initiative called the streetscape. So it is being worked on rigorously and Public Works has adjusted their staffing and resources to accommodate that workload in the best way that they can.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I just wanted to thank the City Manager for immediately getting on this issue and taking care of it, and if there is anything else that you all see or I see certainly coming through the City Manager's Office to try to amend those issues. I would also be remiss not to say that the City Manager has been very much working with your group on this future vision there and I think his staff has been working very closely with your staff as far as moving forward on that project, but thank you very much Commissioner for bringing it up. Yes, I did use this venue to articulate what I think we should be doing in downtown to make it a better quality of life type of working environment.

Mr. O'Rourke: Thank you, if I could just make a quick comment, just from a retailer standpoint, I wanted to thank Commissioner Cabrera, Commissioner Kerdyk, City Manager Salerno being on the Mile and paying the premium that we pay on the Mile and then in addition to that paying a millage rate for a BID, and dealing with retailers that are struggling and have been struggling and wanted to maintain this downtown area and bring it back and keep it vibrant. I just wanted to say that as a retailer, without having my BID hat on at the moment, or my Chamber hat on, I want to say thank you, thank you for having the City take care of those sidewalks, not everyone can afford to dip into their pockets and take on the expenses of that.

Mayor Slesnick: Well, let me say this, it is a team effort and I have a bunch of comments, in no particular order, a lot of it is that I would like to make the record complete about the part that the City plays in all of these areas, that you have talked about for those who are watching, but I would like to also comment on the sidewalk cleaning. If you go to Europe and other places, every merchant has a pride of taking care of the front of their store or their restaurant, and it seems to me that the BID has a role in instilling that pride and trying to get people to take pride; and I have had out of town guests this week, and we walked the Mile and we walked your area of Ponce and there are some places that just don't do it; and I think as well as advertising the Mile and bringing journalists to the Mile and so forth, trying to instill in the merchants and the members of the BID that pride in their own place is important; and I will give you an example of one place that it just is terrible and it is a large national corporate thing, so we are not holding out any small retailer, but Fedex formerly Kinkos, the flower beds, tree beds whatever they are, they are horrible. They have been horrible for the last 9 years and nothing has been done, and that is just one of several examples, but since they are a big national thing, you would think that they could do something about that and I want to see if the BID would encourage them to do something to make their place look a little better. It is already a glaring piece in the Ponce landscape, but you know, as far as our part of the team, and I would like the citizens to

understand that this Commission and this City went to the wall financially and otherwise to create a new parking garage, a new museum garage to handle these cars that are coming and then talking to John about the Seasons 52, we certainly and Ralph leaned over me and said, we need another garage and we all know that and we are working on that and we are trying to piece together that. You know we take major efforts and we work very hard in this City to put together and the administration prior to this one if you will, there was a change of several of us in the Commission, but including Commissioner Withers and Vice Mayor Kerdyk, really improved the Mile with the median down the Mile, and that was an incredible improvement to the Mile, and them moving to this generation in the early 2000's, we did the Ponce median. I think that both of those were major investments in helping improve and gave you something to work with in your advertising and in your photo ops and so forth. One area that I have to tell you that we still need to work on Mr. Manager is the newspaper stands. We have tried our best over the years to regulate newspaper stands, fought a court case with the citizens money to regulate newspaper stands, won the court case, thank you, and then we now have some that are still out there that are not being used; and I don't know that the Sun Sentinel puts papers on theirs anymore, there are several places in the BID that really need to be cleaned up as far as getting rid of unused newspaper stands and containers. I would like to thank our Economic Sustainability Office and before that it was the Economic Development Office, Cathy Swanson now Cyndi Birdsill; and I know that this office, the Mayor's office and other offices worked with Seasons 52 and worked with other merchants as they come into the Gables and try to work with the BID in encouraging their relocation here. The events that we have participated in, and trying to bring here and working with the Kiwanis of Little Havana on Carnival on the Mile; and I go back to my very first...second year in office with this whole Commission and our Flamingos Project. It is kind of regretful that we have not done a follow up to that, but that was a big project for the BID and the City directly. The cleanliness we have talked about, but we hired a new crew just two years ago, three years ago to be a crew they were part-timers, they were brand new employees to go out and pick up papers and other things. We installed new garbage collectors, very attractive ones, throughout the Ponce corridor and on the Mile. So that we took a responsibility there in trying to empty them and take care of them, and it takes manpower and so forth, security, over the past twenty years bicycle crews have been established, segways police officers have been given to downtown and other areas; and of course, we have even a bicycle patrol from our Fire Department, we have a rescue squad on bicycles for public events and things in downtown Coral Gables; and so all of these things are things that the City is a part of, Bill your verbiage the team Coral Gables, that the City is proud to be part of and be responsible for and be contributing to. Also, our cultural center lies within the BID, also the City owns and helps maintain the Miracle Theater and leases that for bringing people to...and we are creating the new art cinema and the new museum of course; and all of those three things lie within the BID and hopefully all of the efforts and the expenditures and the citizens money that is going into those will help bring business and people to the BID, and hopefully the BID in return can help us in the opening and support the museum and the art cinema; and I know that you all have a great partnership already with the Actors Playhouse at the Miracle Theater. So if all of those things are team things, and before I finish just one thing, and that is I have had several merchants tell me that they are not as pleased as we might hope they will be with "Giralda Under the Stars," and how it is working and what it does for them, or doesn't do for them, and I have been there now several times, and you know it is kind of like a great idea, but it needs a little more "umph" maybe if it is going to really

work; but one of the points, that I thought was the best point they brought up is that we do it on a night that was already a big night for them; and instead of really increasing their business it has made people less likely to come in because they can't park or it hasn't helped and if can maybe think about doing it on a night that wasn't a big night for Giralda anyways, but we are doing it on a night that they already had good business. So anyways, I appreciate everything that the BID does and that you all do and I appreciate the report today, and I know that everybody here is committed to continue to work with the BID, and with our downtown.

Ms. Gallet: Thank you, we appreciate the partnership, and yes everyone at the City from all of you to the staff it is a pleasure to work with, and we are really looking forward to the cultural changes to Aragon and the museum and the art cinema and working with them on 10/10/10 to open up that great area. So thank you and again thank you for allowing us time to be here today.

Altogether: Thank you.

[End: 10:15:45 a.m.]