

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item F-8**  
**October 26, 2021**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**

**Vice Mayor Michael Mena**

**Commissioner Rhonda Anderson**

**Commissioner Jorge Fors**

**Commissioner Kirk Menendez**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**

**City Attorney, Miriam Ramos**

**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

**Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**George Navarro**

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Agenda Item F-8 [Start: 10:53 a.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission approving receipt of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) pursuant to Zoning Code Section 14-204.6, “Review and approval of use of TDRs on receiver sites,” for the receipt and use of TDRs for the mixed use project referred to as “100 Miracle Mile,” on the property legally described as Lots 19-29, Block 3, Crafts Section (100 Miracle Mile, 115 Andalusia, and 2414 Galiano), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date; including required conditions; providing for an effective date. (11 12 2020 PZB recommended approved, Vote 5-0)

Mayor Lago: I’ll like to take F-8, if possible.

City Attorney Ramos: F-8 is a Resolution of the City Commission approving receipt of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) pursuant to Zoning Code Section 14-204.6, “Review and approval

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of use of TDRs on receiver sites,” for the receipt and use of TDRs for the mixed use project referred to as “100 Miracle Mile,” on the property legally described as Lots 19-29, Block 3, Crafts Section (100 Miracle Mile, 115 Andalusia, and 2414 Galiano), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date; including required conditions; providing for an effective date. This is a public hearing item. Mr. Trias. Actually, before we start, Mr. Clerk can you swear Mr. Trias in and anyone else who wishes to speak.

City Clerk Urquia: Anyone else speaking on this item? Mr. Trias please raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you’ll provide today will be the truth and nothing but the truth?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I do.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you sir.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Mayor and Commissioners, this project was approved as a mixed-use project in 2019. At the time the Commission postponed the final provisions for the TDR part of the process to a future date. That future date is today. I believe the applicant can give you some of the details. So, this will be the final step in the project.

Mayor Lago: Good morning.

Commissioner Fors: Mr. Clerk can we clarify that Mr. Navarro has been sworn in.

City Clerk Urquia: Does he have to be sworn in?

City Attorney Ramos: He doesn’t need to be, he’s an attorney.

Commissioner Fors: Perfect. He raised his hand when he walked in.

Commissioner Anderson: He did.

Mr. Navarro: Just in case.

City Attorney Ramos: For good measure.

Mr. Navarro: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, Commissioners, we are back before you. This project, as your Planning Director mentioned, was approved in 2019. This is a project that we worked with the Commission to make sure that we maintained the height low, along Miracle Mile, and put the height towards the rear of the property. We are coming back in for the TDRs. The TDRs are only applying to the Andalusia parcel. We are not transferring any TDRs to the Miracle Mile parcel. We’ve selected two properties. We’ve gone through the process with the Historic Preservation

Board. Positive recommendation from your Planning and Zoning Board, and we are asking for your final approval here today.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Navarro, if I may. Good morning. First off, thank you for being here.

Mr. Navarro: Pleasure.

Mayor Lago: The height on Miracle Mile was approved for?

Mr. Navarro: So, we have 43 feet, 3 stories.

Mayor Lago: Which is an existing structure, correct.

Mr. Navarro: Its an existing structure. It's the SunTrust Building. We are going to fully refurbish that building. We are going to maintain it at 3 stories with a rooftop amenity deck, and then in the back we have 14 stories, 145 feet.

Mayor Lago: So, I just want to mention something. Things have changed since 2019. You know, this is a project that in my eyes, I don't want to speak for the Commission, is welcome, and I'll tell you why its welcome. We want to see more residential in the downtown, and I'll give you an example of how welcome residential would be in the downtown. I was speaking to Kevin Kinney, our Parking Director, and we were talking, he handles the trolleys; and I was asking him how our trolley system was evolving the first three weeks of Saturday service, and its incrementally gone up. I think it was like 6 or 700 users on a Saturday. That goes to show you and here he is right here, we are talking about trolleys. 818 last Saturday, okay. So, I'm very proud of that, I'm very proud of that and this Commission should be very proud of that, because its not costing the city a dollar. Those were demonstration projects for the next two years funding is covered for by the TPO. We need more residential in the downtown. Again, tasteful residential, like this project which is respecting Miracle Mile. We fought very hard to make sure that Miracle Mile was respected and that its historic significance was valued. We don't oppose development, as long as its done properly. So, I think that this is going to bring a good opportunity for people to move to the downtown, live in our downtown, help support some of our businesses; and I think that this is one of the projects that is going to be very tastefully done and is going to kind of revitalize our downtown in the evenings and on weekends, which again, as you can see by the trolley service only continues to grow as more and more people become aware of our downtown.

Commissioner Menendez: I want to mention and echo the Mayor's thoughts on having folks live in the downtown in the Miracle Mile area. Yesterday, I had lunch with former elected official of Coral Gables and had the most fascinating history lesson on Coral Gables, and in particularly Miracle Mile area. How for decades upon decades there has always been a struggle to keep it alive, to keep it vibrant. And it's gone through periods where its on life-support. And now that the Mayor mentions it, the one thing that has never been tried is having people actually live in the Miracle Mile downtown corridor. That's the one thing that over the last, what, 60-70 years has never been tried, and to me, it's a commonsense approach. If they live there, they go have breakfast there,

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they buy their clothes there, that's part of their life. It's never been tried, and I think its something that I agree with the Mayor, should be encouraged, and having quality projects that welcome people to that area, not only good for the city, but good for our downtown, good for Miracle Mile. So, I think that's something that definitely we should support.

Commissioner Anderson: Just a couple of comments. I had the pleasure of being on the Planning and Zoning Board when this project came forward. Its an exceptional project and the folks that live downtown across the street, the residents there came forward and said that they were in favor of the project, and it influenced my vote considerably. We have approximately 800 people now living in the downtown core, and this will go a long way towards increasing that number. And I'm very proud of the way that Mr. Behar's firm has reutilized the existing structure too. So, we are also looking at it from a sustainability standpoint, as well as a piece of beauty, reuse of the building. So, thank you for your hard work.

Vice Mayor Mena: Those are all things when we first spoke about this project and approved it that we talked about and then there was a back and forth with the neighbors, you know, and you guys really took the effort to work with them and everything you did to sort of shield some of the parking, and some of the landscaping concessions on the backside of the building, obviously. So, I think this is a good example that things can get done, if they are done in the right way. Looking forward to seeing what you guys do with this project.

Mr. Navarro: Thank you.

Commissioner Fors: And again, Mr. Navarro, so its clear for everybody who may have missed it. It doesn't increase the height on Miracle Mile.

Mr. Navarro: No, it does not. Its actually the poster child for legislation that was ultimately adopted. This project, I think, is very in line with that vision.

Mayor Lago: Yes. And I wanted to say, I said it before, I want to say it again. We took a very strong stance in regard to Miracle Mile and my position continues to be the same, and this is the type of building which shows that there could be reuse, like Commissioner Anderson mentioned, you can have a greatly designed building which has reuse, takes a sustainable approach and protects Miracle Mile. There is an opportunity for development all over Coral Gables. Respect the code, we are willing to give you additional bonuses if there is great public benefit, but this is an example of a project which understood the code and is now going to bring a lot of life to our downtown. So, I commend the developer, Robert Behar, your law firm, for really putting forth a project which is, I think is going to make a big difference in the downtown.

Mr. Navarro: Thank you. It was a community effort, as the Vice Mayor mentioned, we worked with the neighborhood next-door, the residents to get their support, so overall it was a great project.

Mayor Lago: I'd like to meet with you to discuss art, if possible, in regard to the projects afterwards.

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Mr. Navarro: We'd love to.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, I'll entertain a motion.

Commissioner Menendez: I'll make a motion.

Vice Mayor Mena: Second.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes

Commissioner Menendez: Yes

Commissioner Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mr. Navarro: Thank you very much. And definitely, I'll accept your invitation to talk about art for this project.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. I look forward to it.

Mr. Navarro: Definitely. Same here.