

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items G-8 and G-9 are related
April 12, 2022
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias

Public Works Director, Hermes Diaz

Public Speaker(s)

Maria Cruz

Jessica Keller

Agenda Items G-8 and G-9 are related [11:15 a.m.]

Discussion regarding Vision Zero.

(Sponsored by Commissioner Anderson)

Discussion regarding potential bike lane route on Valencia.

(Sponsored by Commissioner Anderson)

Mayor Lago: Commissioner Anderson, do you mind if I bring in G-8, discussion regarding Vision Zero? Because we have certain people in the room that I want to make sure that we -- that they don't have to go -- want to get everybody engaged.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah. No, we can bring that forward. It was...

Mayor Lago: Perfect.

Commissioner Anderson: I emailed you all a copy of the -- what was it, a proclamation...

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: That you were part of to just bring that forward because it will kind of dovetail in with G-9 as well.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: And the purpose of this is to protect pedestrians, and it dovetails in as well with a lot of the things that we're dealing with, with some of the projects we're working on to try to improve pedestrian safety throughout the City. And I wanted to bring this up together with Villa Valencia, which we can either deal with now or deal with later on today.

Mayor Lago: We could do it now if you'd like.

Commissioner Anderson: Which is G-9, to talk about the potential for a bike lane route on Valencia. Now, what I emailed you on Villa Valencia was a couple things: one, the original ordinance which required our Planning Division to pass on whether or not a median should be in the middle of that street or a bike lane on the side. I've walked it several times recently. It is

fenced off with the space that I would envision being the bike lane encapsulated inside that fenced area, so there's -- it's apparent there's room for a bike lane. And I had some discussions with staff about how we should route these bicycles, not only on Valencia in the 500 block where Villa Valencia is, but in the 600 and 700 block, all the way to Anderson to build a continuous bike lane all the way to the mobility hub. So, staff I know is well versed in this. I've thrown around ideas, whether we need to narrow it down to one-way traffic on Valencia heading east and then bring people back on another route. But I think we need to think about this now before the final approvals are given on Villa Valencia for a median or not a median, and to put that bike lane in there for us so at least that block is done. It'll tie in with a Segovia bike lane as well, so it's a good cross-section to do it in. It solves the problem of the bike lane issue on Biltmore Way because this pushes it behind Biltmore Way. Mr. Diaz, are you ready? I saw you -- you were going like this in your seat.

Public Works Director Diaz: Good morning.

Commissioner Anderson: So, you're ready.

Public Works Director Diaz: Hermes Diaz, Public Works Director. So, the plans for the Villa Valencia project, the way they were designed for the length of the product, they're leaving the asphalt so the bike lane can be added.

Vice Mayor Mena: Do you have any visuals?

Public Works Director Diaz: No. No, I do not.

Commissioner Anderson: If you have your email available to you, there is the traffic study Exhibit F. And it'll show a drawing to you of the street with the median in it.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, in order to make the bike lanes on both sides to extend all the way, you have to do a combination of either getting rid of the on-street parking altogether or reconstructing the sidewalks and making them narrower for the entire block at a minimum. And on that specific block, you have a -- yes?

Commissioner Anderson: Which side of the street you're talking about because I looked at only the north side of the street and there appeared to be sufficient space to put a bike lane on the asphalt there.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, when the streets -- the sidewalk, I believe, is eight-foot wide, plus the curb is eight and a half. So, then you have the parking, and it becomes very narrow. So, there wouldn't be enough space for you to put a parking in and a bike lane for the remainder of that block. The way both things could be accomplished where you maintain the parking space and the bike lane will be to -- the sidewalk -- we have to take away a couple of feet of the sidewalk that's about to be reconstructed narrower. And then on the south side, you have a similar condition for approximately half of the block. Then once you get to the intersection of Segovia, you have a relatively newer development that has some bump outs with some trees that will have to be -- those trees will have to go. And...

Commissioner Anderson: Well, that assumes that you run the bike lane on the south side as well.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, what we have right now on the way that the Villa Valencia was designed was for a five-foot bike lane. That will only allow for a one-way bike lane, and I think...

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Public Works Director Diaz: That's a two-way road. So, if we're going to do -- and it may be feasible to put a two-way bike lane on one side only, but then it needs to be wider. At that point, the parking lane is gone.

Commissioner Anderson: Alright, so what I had talked to you about yesterday is, because we're limited on space...

Public Works Director Diaz: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: We're a built out city. We may need to make it eastbound one way on one street and westbound on a different street, not the same street. Have you looked at that?

Public Works Director Diaz: Usually, if -- that street is two-way, so generally speaking, I mean, that's something we can explore further. But generally speaking, if it's a two-way street, you want to have the bikes, you know, east and (INAUDIBLE) on the same roadway. I mean, we could see if we can get creative somehow, but it's a little counterintuitive if you're a biker.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah. I don't think we have that much bike traffic that is going to be, you know, that conflicting. I ride it now -- okay? -- as dangerous as some people might see that it is, but you have to do it. But if we can have it a painted area, if you can put those little bumps -- I call them rumble strips -- on the painted line to -- sort of like lane assist on your vehicles. It keeps the cars out of the bike lane and keeps the bikers in the bike line. They have them in Vegas. It works very well for people that have drank a little too much, to keep them in their lanes, but we need to get this moving because they're going to want to pull their TPO.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, I actually have a meeting coming up with the developer just to go through a list of things that they have pending, at least from our part of it. And you know, we'll have some additional discussions about what will be the best way to move forward with this. But

I can tell you that the frontage of their building is designed -- there's enough asphalt space for the bike lane if it's a bike lane to run for maybe half of the block or something like that.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Public Works Director Diaz: The sidewalk is narrower in that area for that purpose, and the asphalt was left wider, and you still have a parking lane away from the circle on the bump outs.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay. So, when you do that, I mean, I'd love to be part of it to help assist the conversation to see where we're going to swing these bikes back onto either Biltmore Way or all the way down to Le Jeune, and how we're going to get them in front of the mobility hub.

Public Works Director Diaz: We'll have some internal discussion and then we can have some further conversation just to see how we can accomplish that.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay.

Mayor Lago: Anything else?

Vice Mayor Mena: Two just quick comments. One -- well, not that quick. One is quick. On -- for stuff like this if we're going to talk about a specific route...

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Can we just have like a laptop and put it up...

Public Works Director Diaz: Sure.

Vice Mayor Mena: Because I feel like you guys are obviously very familiar with the specific...

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Intersection you're talking about, but off the top of my head...

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: I'm looking online. I did see some of the stuff that were circulated, but it would be helpful for us, given that we have a TV, to...

Public Works Director Diaz: Point taken.

Vice Mayor Mena: To be able to pull that out.

Public Works Director Diaz: Absolutely.

Vice Mayor Mena: With regard -- circling back to G-8 now, which is not specific to Valencia, but just this Vision Zero thing, I was -- I want to get clarity on -- because I know this is like an international...

Mayor Lago: Effort.

Vice Mayor Mena: Program or whatever that is happening in different cities. And are there specific -- we all want to see pedestrian and bicycle safety, right. We start from that premise.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

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Agenda Items G-8 and G-9 are related - Discussion regarding Vision Zero and potential bike lane route on Valencia.

Vice Mayor Mena: So, I guess my question is, what does Vision Zero actually call for? Are there particular things that we're calling for here other than just the general, you know, pedestrian safety, are there like real action items? And when I saw it on the agenda, I did some very quick research, but you know, I wasn't sure what we're looking for here. But I asked Chief Hudak, and he asked Major Hoff to actually do some research because I was curious what our statistics look like in terms of -- you know, I know we've done things to slow traffic and try to support this effort for years now, but you know, I don't know what the numbers look like. And I had them prepare a memo, which they got to me last night, which I'd ask them to circulate please. If -- and I don't know if you have copies with you. But the biggest takeaway -- there's a lot of statistics in here. The biggest takeaway that I was surprised to see, we've had zero fatalities the last three years that are pedestrian or bicycle with automobile, right. We had the situation last year where a pedestrian and a bicyclist had an accident, and somebody passed away. That one we're familiar with, but auto -- I was really surprised that...

Commissioner Anderson: Fatalities, no.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: I know somebody that was hit because they're in my area.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: I know you're talking about narrowing the sidewalk. I mean, I want to keep the bicycles separate from the pedestrians because that's quite hazardous.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: This is -- you know, when I first sat down here, I started talking to you all about notice to people. I mean, and Commissioner Fors has this notice procedure where you can...

Unidentified Speaker: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Sign up for it. And not to trample on anybody's rights as an as-of-right project, but having this input at an earlier point in time helps a lot of the stuff that's being done on the Villa Valencia project could have been incorporated as part of the Aloft project, especially if we would have thought about setting the building back a little further and giving up a little bit of a parking lot behind. And that's where I think we need to improve our process. If we engage people...

Vice Mayor Mena: Sure.

Commissioner Anderson: That live around the area. They can see problems that we can't see because they live there so...

Vice Mayor Mena: That...

Commissioner Anderson: I think this notice procedure will help if we just...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Commissioner Anderson: Broaden it a little bit to get this type of input and what's needed in the area.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, again, that's why I know there's two different items, so I'm not necessarily focused on Villa Valencia. I think that's a point well taken. And on any project, we should be focused on, you know, what can be done. But just more broadly, you know, we lowered the speed limits.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: We've been implementing traffic calming. Obviously, Police has -- a lot of what they do has to do with dealing with traffic and so on and so forth. And so, you know, I -- and I know we have a lot in the pipeline as well.

Public Works Director Diaz: We do.

Vice Mayor Mena: So, what is it that the board is looking for with respect to Vision Zero? Because again, I was pleasantly surprised to see that in the last few years, we've had zero fatalities involving...

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: A pedestrian or bicyclist with an automobile. Again, there's other statistics here. There have definitely been accidents, and obviously, people didn't get seriously hurt and nobody's denying that. That's why we're doing all the things we're doing. But I want to understand the effectiveness of what we're currently doing, which is why I asked for actual data, and then two, what is actually being asked that we do in addition other than a lot of the things we're already kind of in the pipeline.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, Vision Zero is kind of like a -- it's like a maybe using a planning document per se is not the right term, but it's an approach where, in essence, you prioritize

pedestrians and bicyclists over cars. And the idea is that eventually to encourage people to get out of the cars and get on a bike and walk. And that's in the essence -- and you know, there's all sorts of things with the Vision Zero. They have a whole thing about equity and inclusion and targeting underserved communities and things of that nature. But that's the bulk of that. And the goal is to eventually get to a level of zero fatality, which the County reached out. I think they have a goal of 2030. And you know, one of the things that we have for us to implement something like Vision Zero, it's not very often that goes counter to the wishes of the community, especially sometimes bike lanes, occasionally sidewalks. But like you mentioned, we're doing a lot of things already. We lowered the speed limit citywide. Traffic calming started in February. I mean, that's a five-year program so we got a while to go before we build that. We're doing...

Mayor Lago: But we are building it.

Public Works Director Diaz: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: And it is funded.

Public Works Director Diaz: Yes.

Mayor Lago: And to reduce the speed limit, this Commission did that. It took us four years to do that.

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

Mayor Lago: And we got a joint agreement with the County on a litany of different things that was able to get us a traffic calming. That was another three- to four-year process with staff's efforts.

Public Works Director Diaz: And...

Mayor Lago: So, we're moving in the right direction, and I think we're moving in the right direction, but I've noticed one quick thing. When you say sidewalks and you say bike lanes are not well received in certain instances, I think that they're well received, especially sidewalks, if you do, for example, what we're doing on Alhambra and on Blue Road. We're going to put together a plan, and we're going to go and speak to the residents individually and explain to them, "Look, this is what we're doing. Does this bother you? Do you like this? Do you not like this?" This is conceptual. We're not -- and in areas that if we can get certain wins, for example, like on Alhambra, connection to the bridge, if we can get that done on Blue Road, I think people will become more and more comfortable with the sidewalks when they see them implemented in areas that make sense. A lot of these areas that we're talking about are side yards so it's not going to bother people because they're on the side yard. So, I think once we start getting those under our belt, I think we're going to see a lot more people be receptive at a minimum to sidewalks.

Commissioner Menendez: I just want to add this weekend I had the good fortune of being in Boston with my wife. We were visiting our daughter in college. And in Boston, there are bike lanes everywhere. You can't go down a street without bike lanes. But I did notice there were some well-positioned bike lanes that made all the sense of the world, and then at some intersections, the bike lanes were so chaotic, it was almost indistinguishable between where the car is supposed to go and where the bike's supposed to go. So, I think if we can do, I guess, the -- to coin the phrase "smart bike lanes," I think it's about time. I think if we don't do it at some point, it may never happen, but however, whatever blocks are impacted, I want to make sure the residents on that block have input in terms of narrowing or sidewalks, making the street go one way because they're the ones who live there every day. And I know we do a great job, I think, as a City of making sure before we even go too much down a certain path that we get input, not necessarily only from the folks that want the bike lanes, but the ones that are impacted most on those particular blocks, safety first. And the City's done such a great job, as been discussed, with lowering the speed limit, and

the statistics are phenomenal. I just want to make sure that whatever we do going forward to encourage people to use their bikes and to walk, that we don't -- we do things in a careful fashion so that those statistics don't get altered in the negative as a result of what we do. So, I think smart bike lanes is the way to go, but I just want to make sure we get the residents impacted the most involved.

Commissioner Anderson: So, it ties in with what the Mayor's saying, and I -- and we need to be a little more proactive in this. I noticed that the project was -- you know, they're pouring the cement and we hadn't addressed this issue yet, so that's why I put it on the agenda. You know, the whole Vision Zero and everything that we do on these projects coming forward, we need to think about it ahead of time. Because, you know, the -- even the walk signals were not put in on the corner of Le Jeune and Valencia when Aloft was built in, so pedestrians knew when it was safe to cross. You know, there wasn't enough sidewalk space there for the cars to be able to see when they were making a right-hand turn, they couldn't see whether or not a pedestrian existed. You know, and I am working on it, and I'm going to ask for your support where we have these transitional areas where you have higher speeds, such as Le Jeune Road, Blue Road, and Bird Road. These cars turning in, those areas need special attention to help slow down the cars, you know.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: Encourage, you know, the speed bumps and so forth, and we have that on the Alexan where I had asked that developer to include that for the first two blocks off Le Jeune, and they agreed.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay.

Mayor Lago: Is there anything else that we want to add this?

Commissioner Anderson: No, just want to make sure we follow through on this project before it is done.

Public Works Director Diaz: We'll be talking again.

City Manager Iglesias: Since we're also looking at G-9 and our prior encouragement into -- in -- for the comments that the Vice Mayor mentioned on G-9, if we're going to be looking at bike lanes, is that something that the Commission is looking at bike lanes for Andalusia or Valencia? I think if we're looking at bike lanes, are we connecting Le Jeune to Douglas and things like this, because one block of bike lanes in a completely developed area, I'm not sure how effective that is. So, are we -- so, before we move into that and considering what we've had before considering bicycles, is the Commission's will to look at bike lanes on Valencia and Andalusia?

Vice Mayor Mena: Well, I think at the last meeting on -- as it related at least to the mobility hub, there was an interest in pursuing a bike lane on Andalusia, and I think we were pretty clear about that.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Obviously, this is not too far from there. I'm not as familiar with this specific location. That's why I was asking to kind of work through a visual of some kind so we could talk about it, but I would say, you know, I think having lanes and protected lanes and whatever type of infrastructure in the developed part of downtown does make some sense because, number one, it's not encroaching on the residential neighborhoods, which is typically where residents would -- you know, they don't want to necessarily have it in front of their house. But two, it's where you get the

most traffic, so you know, you probably need a little more protection in the downtown than you do on a residential street.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

City Manager Iglesias: It could encroach on parking -- in downtown parking.

Vice Mayor Mena: Sure. And that's got to be part of the conversation.

Mayor Lago: And also, something we could discuss, I mean, where we were talking about Andalusia, maybe Andalusia's not the right location. Maybe it's the other side of Publix, which that whole -- the whole entire block is going to be redeveloped. So, if you're going down Valencia, you could stop at the light at Valencia, cross Le Jeune, and you could have a dedicated bike lane. I mean, again, I know it's a one-way street headed in the opposite direction, but again, those are other opportunities that you could take a look at and have a more contiguous route, and you don't have to...

City Manager Iglesias: And as far as Andalusia's concerned, we're looking at the fact that our trolley carries 1.25 million people in 2019 and we'll be approaching that. We're looking at a special stop on Andalusia for the mobility hub to create a -- for it to be a regional center. Because now we can connect the mobility hub to the Metrorail, and we can connect the mobility hub to the trolley system of City of Miami.

Vice Mayor Mena: I mean, that intersection on Le Jeune and just south of Aloft is...

Public Works Director Diaz: Is very -- yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Is terrible.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, it's...

Vice Mayor Mena: I don't know how else to describe it because the incoming traffic coming westbound, that lane is not aligned with when you cross Le Jeune, so they kind of come through, they do like a this thing, and they go that way. There's not really -- there's like one crosswalk on I think the north side but none on the south side.

City Manager Iglesias: There's an alignment issue.

Vice Mayor Mena: That intersection is a mess.

Public Works Director Diaz: Absent a better option...

Vice Mayor Mena: I've crossed it as a pedestrian. There's not a safe way to do it.

Public Works Director Diaz: That might not be our best...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, that's...

Public Works Director Diaz: Choice of sending the bikers at that intersection.

Vice Mayor Mena: So, you know, again, we got to talk about it, but...

City Manager Iglesias: There's a road misalignment there, so it creates all kinds of problems.

Commissioner Anderson: Right. And some of the improvements needed are being done from the Villa Valencia project. You know, it's a neighborhood near me that's involved on it. I really

pushed for that. I didn't get painted the "Do Not Block the Box" issue, so that's just a perpetual problem there at that Publix site. But you know, I put this on so we can start talking.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: Because we really need to start talking about it. It's one block away from Andalusia, so we might need to go use Valencia for a certain amount and then zigzag down -- or up I should say -- to pick up Andalusia. So, maybe we can put it on again next time and have some more data?

Public Works Director Diaz: Have a little bit more time. The next Commission meeting is when?

Commissioner Menendez: Can we have an aerial map also from...?

Commissioner Anderson: An aerial map, et cetera.

Commissioner Menendez: Up down so we can see the street alignments?

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, I mean, you have -- pull up the email I sent out to everybody. It does have a map, not the perfect map, but it'll give you some idea.

City Manager Iglesias: We can bring this up in the meeting in May, then we have a little more time, and we know that the Commission is looking at potentially bike lanes in the downtown area. And in this particular case, we're going to look at Andalusia and Valencia.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, before they pour more cement at Villa Valencia. That's my concern.

Mayor Lago: So, why don't we --? We've discussed it. I think there's a full consensus in the Commission. Why don't we start talking about this, kind of like we did on Blue Road, kind of like we talked about Alhambra in regards to the sidewalks that are in the process of being designed, and hopefully, we'll be getting them soon. Why don't we have a --? I'm more than willing to have a sunshine meeting to discuss this if you want, whatever you'd like.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I think we can look at the Villa Valencia project now because it's being done, and then we can look -- we can come back and look at Valencia and Andalusia in their entirety.

Mayor Lago: I just want to make sure it doesn't hold up their TCO.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: Because we've got to get that project finished and the neighborhood back in order.

City Manager Iglesias: We can look at Valencia -- at the Valencia project now.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Vice Mayor Mena: But I want to -- last -- I'll leave it with this note. We have achieved zero fatalities between automobile, bicyclist, and pedestrian over the last three and a half years based on the statistics I was provided by Police. There's been accidents. Nobody can negate that. Of course, there's going to be accidents, but let's be clear. And then there was two in 2018.

Public Works Director Diaz: And unfortunately...

Vice Mayor Mena: No -- which are two too many. We all want to see zero every year, but I'm just saying, the idea that, you know, there's some sort of massive problem with fatalities in Coral Gables resulting from this, you know, let's be careful. I think we're doing -- we've done a lot of good things already. We're doing a lot of good things already. Our police do a great job. We have the lower speed limits. Let's keep it going, and let's do whatever else we think needs to be done. Let's look at Valencia. Let's look where we can add some bike lanes, great. We already know the limitations of where we are and are not going to do as it relates to that. We already know we're going to listen to residents on that. And let's just keep doing -- making good progress.

Public Works Director Diaz: And unfortunately, there's very little we can do about irresponsible behavior sometimes from drivers.

Vice Mayor Mena: Of course.

Public Works Director Diaz: I mean, as for going...

Commissioner Anderson: Right. That's why they plowed through that circle on Villa -- on Valencia and Hernandez so many times because there's irresponsible drivers.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Diaz, for the next Commission meeting, through the Manager, I'd like an update on Blue and also Alhambra in regards to the sidewalks, okay?

Public Works Director Diaz: I can tell you that Blue, we have a surveyor already on board.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Public Works Director Diaz: Because we need a full-fledged survey before we do a full design. That needs to go to the County. Alhambra, we have something to show you at the next Commission meeting.

Mayor Lago: I also want to commend your staff for getting these sidewalks done, at the request of Mayor Cason, adjacent to the Granada Golf Course. It's a great addition. People no longer have to walk on the grass where the sidewalk just dies. So, thank you for getting that completed as per our walkthrough a few months ago.

Public Works Director Diaz: You're welcome.

Mayor Lago: It's on the works right now. It's not done yet, but it's in the works.

Public Works Director Diaz: I think they're just cleaning up and some sodding. I think the path itself is finished.

Mayor Lago: Perfect. Thank you. Alright, moving on to F...

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, before you move on, we do have two members of the public...

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: Requesting to speak on this.

Mayor Lago: Perfect.

City Clerk Urquia: First is Ms. Maria Cruz.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Cruz.

City Clerk Urquia: Mrs. Maria Cruz.

Mayor Lago: Mrs. Cruz.

Maria Cruz: Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. I was not here for this, but as you know, I look after the whole city, not just my little area. I think we're treading in very dangerous waters here. I think that we do have in the city a Transportation Board that deals with transportation, meaning bicycles, cars, et cetera. And I think that discussing bike lanes and all this here today without giving them a chance to express what they consider, you are -- we're going back a few years. Now, we're going to talk again about we're not going to have cars. You know, Vision Zero -- I think I called it Zero Vision -- because what we're doing here is doing what we tried to do a few years ago. We're going to force Coral Gables, the residents of Coral Gables, the people like me, to, I guess, get a three-wheeler because I don't know how to ride a regular bike, and I guess I'll leave my car parked in my house because the cars are not going away. The people that live in the City of Coral Gables will be driving cars forever and ever more because we don't like to get sweaty, because we don't like to do that. And I think coming here to talk about the possibility -- what really floored me, the first comment that got me upset was we're talking to the developer. Hello, we should be talking to the residents before we talk to the developers. I have to remind you that I lived through this in -- on Miller Road. I lived through this years ago when the City talked to the University. They worked out the plan. They decided what to do, and then when we realized it, it was so advanced we couldn't change it. No. The people that pay the taxes here, the residents of the City of Coral Gables need to be the ones in the conversation before you all are discussing what is going to affect them. And I'm going to tell you here, like I told you then a few years ago -- and this is why you had the massive number of people involved. You need to convince them when you mix sidewalks and bicycles, you're losing the point. You need to talk to them. You need to make sure they see

the reason why we need to do this instead of the almighty Commission and staff deciding what's good for us. I'm sorry, but you're off track.

Commissioner Anderson: May I...?

Vice Mayor Mena: Can I ask...?

Ms. Cruz: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: I believe Vision Zero, this came from the Transportation Board, didn't it?

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, that came from the Transportation Board.

Ms. Cruz: To discuss it. But this is...

Vice Mayor Mena: That's what we're doing. The discussion was already...

Ms. Cruz: No, no, no. But I'm telling you there's more people...

Vice Mayor Mena: Great.

Ms. Cruz: In this City, okay. And when you talk about everybody's going to be riding bikes, I have news for you.

Vice Mayor Mena: But who's talking about that?

Ms. Cruz: It ain't going to happen.

Vice Mayor Mena: Who's talk -- who said that?

Ms. Cruz: Well, I heard -- see, I agree with you...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Ms. Cruz: And I agree with you. We haven't heard any fatalities. We're doing well with the speed limit. We have the traffic calming, okay. Why are we trying to go more, more and more when people don't want it?

Vice Mayor Mena: Isn't that what we just said?

Commissioner Anderson: Because...

Ms. Cruz: This is all I'm saying.

Vice Mayor Mena: Isn't that -- that's what we just said.

Ms. Cruz: Yes, but we shouldn't...

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Ms. Cruz: Be discussing before you hear the people because when you talk about talking to the Villa Valencia, we're going to talk to the developer.

Commissioner Anderson: Ms. Cruz.

Ms. Cruz: No, let's talk to the people.

Commissioner Anderson: Ms. Cruz.

Ms. Cruz: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: That's the neighborhood I live in. We already discussed it with the Commission that passed the ordinance, the ordinance that requires us to determine how to design that bike lane on a -- whether we put a median in there or a bike lane. There's a clear desire -- Mr. Hammer spoke -- to have a bike lane there. It's a heavy trafficked area. It's a lot easier for people to bike a few blocks to be able to get to Publix, to be able to get to the mobility hub, to be able to come to a Commission meeting, so they would like a bike lane. And we had those neighborhood meetings years ago, and that's why it was included in the final ordinance.

Ms. Cruz: But I thought it was Andalusia; it was not Valencia.

Commissioner Anderson: I've talked...

Ms. Cruz: That's my -- the Valencia is what through the thing because that's not what was discussed.

Commissioner Anderson: We're trying to connect...

Ms. Cruz: Okay, correct?

Commissioner Anderson: We're trying to connect...

Mayor Lago: To navigate the downtown.

Ms. Cruz: Yeah, this is what I'm saying. You know, everything -- I believe our residents are very savvy, and they see the reason for things. But what I'm saying to you is, do not jump ahead before you listen because that's when you find the people saying, "Heck no. We don't want it." And they push you where you don't want to go. This is what I'm saying. Find me -- I mean, you will never see me on a bike so don't worry about me. But what I'm saying to you is remember -- I'm just trying -- you know, history forgotten is history repeated. Do not go onto that path until you convince people that you want to do it.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think...

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

Vice Mayor Mena: I think we agree, which is why I said what I said.

Ms. Cruz: Yeah, yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: And that's -- nobody's forgotten, I promise.

Ms. Cruz: I'm telling you.

Vice Mayor Mena: And everybody's very clear, not only up here, but on staff about...

Ms. Cruz: Well...

Vice Mayor Mena: How we will and will not proceed vis-à-vis some of these things. And so that is why I was asking what exactly are we asking for here, what's the objective, what are we talking about. I think...

Ms. Cruz: You were right on point.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think we're mixing apples and oranges a little bit...

Ms. Cruz: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Just because one thing is the broader...

Ms. Cruz: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: And then one thing is specific.

Ms. Cruz: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: To Commissioner Anderson's point, she's right. The specific item as it relates to Valencia came from a specific approval...

Ms. Cruz: But when you mix is where the problem started.

Vice Mayor Mena: I understand, I understand.

Ms. Cruz: And this is my point, you know...

Vice Mayor Mena: But let's...

Ms. Cruz: We're not Amsterdam. We're not China. We're not going to see everybody on a bike going by and the car waiting for them to go by. It's not going to happen.

Vice Mayor Mena: We know.

Commissioner Menendez: I...

Mayor Lago: Commissioner Menendez.

Ms. Cruz: That's all my point.

Commissioner Menendez: And I agree with you in terms of Vision Zero because, quite honestly, at the end of the day, I can see a balance, a compromise found. And Vision Zero, as soon as I heard that, reminded me of the 1980s Say No to Drugs. Forty years later, we still have drugs.

Ms. Cruz: Yes.

Commissioner Menendez: Forty years later, we're still going to have cars.

Ms. Cruz: Actually, some of it is legal now.

Commissioner Menendez: Yeah, well, I had nothing to do with that.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, so...

Commissioner Menendez: But hopefully, we can strike a balance, and that includes resident input today, tomorrow, and going forward.

Ms. Cruz: Yeah, but remember what I -- my -- what made me jump was that we're talking to the developer. No, we need to be talking to everybody, not just the developer.

Mayor Lago: Alright, so let's -- Commissioner, you have anything else you'd like to say? We have one more person. Okay, go ahead.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker is through Zoom. It's Ms. Jessica Keller.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Keller, good morning. The floor is yours.

Jessica Keller: Good morning. Thank you for giving me the time to speak. Jessica Keller. Commissioner Mena mentioned the lack of deaths, but zero -- Vision Zero also captures severe injuries. And the City is taking incremental steps to make our streets safer, and I acknowledge that fully. I'm happy to hear the willingness of some of the Commission to take action. I was happy to learn in 2018, that the Mayor voted for the target of zero fatalities and injuries in the county as a TPA board member. Vision Zero does not force people out of their cars. It makes those of us who choose not to drive and live a healthy and sustainable lifestyle safe. The City touts itself as a leader in sustainability. Vision Zero and sustainability work together. Making streets safe for everyone is consistent with our sustainability goals. When it comes to actions, the City hasn't taken the hard steps for real leadership. The City struggled to meet its own Green Code for the Public Safety Building when it decided to eliminate safe bicycling infrastructure adjacent to it and even made the decision to widen the roadways adjacent to the Public Safety Building, which runs counter to all Safe Streets and Vision Zero principles. Single mode, single occupancy vehicular travel and sustainability are diametrically opposing concepts. BVs are not the answer. They aren't particularly sustainable. They do not address congestion, and they do not address safe streets. We need to take action to eliminate severe injuries on our streets, so people feel safe enough to choose sustainable modes of transportation. To Commissioner Mena's point, there have been no deaths in three years. But the perception is our streets are dangerous and people will not choose anything but driving, doing nothing to support our sustainability goals. During the January 18th Transportation Advisory Board meeting, one member asked the board to endorse Vision Zero, and another board member opposed it stating it's a utopian idea. I'm sure those of you who did a

quick Google search know that Helsinki, with a population of over 500,000, and Oslo, with a population of nearly 700,000 achieved zero. A small town of 55,000 can do this. We almost have, as Commissioner Mena pointed out. We can take the action to achieve zero severe injuries and fatalities and move the needle on greenhouse gas emissions at the same time. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you for your comments. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: That's it, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Madam Commissioner, any other further comments on your items?

Commissioner Anderson: No.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: No.

Mayor Lago: So, we're -- staff's going to come back in regards to Valencia. We're going to talk about Andalusia. You're going to come back in regards to the sidewalks on Ponce -- excuse me, not on Ponce, I apologize. The sidewalks on Blue and Alhambra.

City Manager Iglesias: Blue and Alhambra.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, those are things that I would like to see back in the next Commission meeting please, along with what Commissioner Anderson has brought forward. And I will...

Commissioner Anderson: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: And I will memorialize it, again, always remembering that we have to speak to the residents, especially when you address the issue of bike lanes, okay. I want to make sure that the residents -- and the best way to do it, the best way, in my opinion -- and I leave it up to staff; they know more -- is get the process started early, like we're doing with Blue Road and like we're doing with Alhambra. We're talking to individual residents, showing them what would you like to see. This is a good opportunity to traverse the city. This is about being safe. The current conditions are not very safe for pedestrians. So, getting their buy-in I think is important as we embark on this. Alright, so moving on.