

City of Coral Gables Blue Ribbon Committee Meeting
September 2, 2021
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

Blue Ribbon Committee Members

Chairperson Felix Pardo

Board Member Aramis "Mitch" Alvarez

Board Member Robert Behar

Board Member Willy Bermello

Board Member Glenn Pratt

Board Member Javier Salman

City Staff

Assistant City Attorney, Gustavo Ceballos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

City Architect, Juan Riesco

Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias

Public Speaker(s)

Gordon Sokoloff

Sue Kawalerski

Myra Jolie

Maria Cruz

Bella Smith

Chairperson Pardo: I'm sorry for the tardy -- late -- the late start today because we have three members that are out -- or two members that are out; and one was fortunately able to come back. And can you call the roll, Mr. Clerk?

City Clerk Urquia: Board Member Alvarez? Not here. Board Member Behar?

Board Member Behar: Present.

City Clerk Urquia: Board Member Bermello?

Board Member Bermello: Present.

City Clerk Urquia: Board Member Pratt is absent. Board Member Salman is absent. Board Member Riesco?

City Architect Riesco: Present.

City Clerk Urquia: Chairperson Pardo?

Chairperson Pardo: Here.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: And is our City Attorney going to be here?

City Clerk Urquia: Our City Attorney is here. He is on Zoom.

Chairperson Pardo: Oh, there we go. How are you?

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Good afternoon.

Chairperson Pardo: Good afternoon.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson Pardo: Welcome. Alright, so at the last board meeting...

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Mr. Chairman, if I may. I'm not sure if you can hear me. Can you confirm that you can hear me well?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir. We can hear you.

Chairperson Pardo: But you have an echo.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Great. Just some general information that I feel the need to let everybody know. Because of timing, we need to have -- frankly, a final product, at the latest, by Tuesday. Given that this will be the last meeting before that Tuesday, I just want to make all the board members aware of that. I don't know if we can really get to that point. I'm sure we're going to try. But if not, we will probably need to take some sort of board action or board decision to elect maybe the Chair or an individual on the board to go before the Commission at the next meeting and let them know that, you know, we weren't ready for that particular Commission meeting. But just so that everybody's aware, because of timing, to make the Planning and Zoning meeting and to make all the meetings for the next Commission meeting, we need to have a completed product by Tuesday.

Chairperson Pardo: Alright.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you, sir.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: You're welcome.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, so we're going to try to move quickly through this. And also, Mr. Bermello brought up some very good points. He had sent the information to our City Attorney, and I was able to put all of these things on the agenda. The last one is not shown on the printed agenda, but it will be discussed.

Board Member Bermello: Very good.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay. So, going quickly through this, on Article 5...

Board Member Behar: Mr. Chair, I think the last -- before we left was the Table 3, remember? We were going to think about it.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct, and that is right. We're going to jump on the Table 3.

Board Member Behar: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: I was going to just try to keep it in order to just get the cleaning up of these things.

Board Member Behar: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: And if Table 3 is eliminated, then there'll be a little further cleanup simply by striking out anything that has to do with Table 3 in case we go that route.

Board Member Behar: Yeah, okay. Do you want to start with the article -- the recommendation, the suggestion that Mr. Bermello made first? Or do you want to go --? I think -- I personally think we should just conclude Table 3.

Chairperson Pardo: Alright.

Board Member Behar: And then go back.

Chairperson Pardo: The Chair accepts that. Let's continue with that. Let's go to Table 3.

Board Member Behar: My recommendation is we keep building setbacks and step back reductions. I think every case is different, and I think that's a good provision that we should keep. That's number one. Number 2, Number 3, I don't have a problem deleting completely, and Number 4. 2, 3, and 4, we could delete.

Chairperson Pardo: Alright, so just for sake of argument, we are all accepting the deletions of Numbers 2, 3, and 4, which are on Table 3, which are the encroachments into the right-of-way, which is Number 2; the parking requirement exemption, which is Number 3; and the multifamily residential density bonus, Number 4. Those will be stricken out. And then we will discuss now Number 1, the building setback. Mr. Behar, can you elaborate?

Board Member Behar: I think -- and this is something that Mr. Trias brought up last week. And we're -- we have a case that I'm working on, on US 1. And in some cases, we have to reduce the setback and increase in other areas. And I think this provision allows the flexibility to do that. And it's something maybe Mr. Trias could elaborate a little further and give us his feedback on this.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Thank you, Mr. Behar, and Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson Pardo: Yes, sir.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The Table 3, in my view, the first section is the only wone that is significant, and that's the one Mr. Behar was referring to. It provides flexibility and proper

review. In other words, the architect -- the City Architect and the Board of Architects can judge whether or not the flexibility with the setbacks makes sense from an urban design point of view. That's very significant if one is trying to achieve a quality result. If we don't do that, then it's simply whatever the setback is, and we're done. I don't think that that leads to quality urban design.

Board Member Bermello: So, Mr. Trias keeps looking at me, so I don't know if that's a -- but I'll say this. As you know...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I didn't mean to. Sorry about that.

Board Member Bermello: When we started, I was one of those persons that wanted to get rid of all of 3. And I've been pretty much steadfast on that. But I heard, Mr. Trias, what you said at the last meeting, and I also heard what Mr. Behar said. So, I -- I'm all for flexibility, and particularly, the applicant and the board can come to something that is good because there's some overwhelming reason given the conditions. So, Mr. Chair, I'm reversing my earlier position, and I'm agreeing with...

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Bermello: The Director of Planning, and also, Mr. Behar.

Chairperson Pardo: Alright.

Board Member Bermello: And I hope that this plays out the way that it's been described here.

Chairperson Pardo: I have some comments, but I'm going to reserve them after -- Juan, do you have any comments about this now?

City Architect Riesco: I'd just like to talk about the strikethroughs and the percentage. The Code now stipulates it's a minimum of 25 percent.

Chairperson Pardo: So, I -- and you're right on target. I think we should strike out A, B, C and D, because they have nothing to do with the setbacks.

City Architect Riesco: Well, I think the trade-off is you allow them not to adhere to the setback, but they have to provide open space in return.

Chairperson Pardo: Well, and I think that's why...

City Architect Riesco: That's the (INAUDIBLE).

Chairperson Pardo: You have to be careful with these formulas of A, B, C and D. For example, this prescriptive 400 square feet of the -- you know, again, we're reverting back to kind of a backwards thing. I think I understand what Mr. Behar is talking about, which is the flexibility on the setbacks being done in such a way that the setbacks could be not necessarily reduced to zero, but that they could be mediated. You know, I think that there should be some verbiage there to give flexibility, but not make it almost sound like an incentive, going back to quote Mr. Bermello when he said that, you know, where is the public benefit? The specific example that Mr. Behar came up with is that it's a unique situation where normally you would go -- on a setback situation, you would simply go to the Board of Adjustment and ask for relief. The problem is that with the Board of Adjustment -- having sat on it two different times -- you can't have a self-imposed hardship. So, therefore, if you're designing, it would be considered a self-imposed hardship. But the flexibility has to be limited in such a way -- I think that the trade-offs that are there are truly redundant based on other places that's already stated in the Code. And I think here that -- in my personal opinion, I think that when you look at a zero setback -- may be reduced to zero setback on all property lines, it sounds like it's all property lines. In other words, you could go to zero on everything. So, again, there's no setback issue. The question is, depending on the particular project

and depending on how it's being mediated somewhere else, that would be my concern. So, I'm sorry to interrupt you. I just wanted to bring that up on this particular issue. Have you seen this come up before?

City Architect Riesco: Well, again, I think Mr. Trias might be able to explain the concept behind the reduction in setback versus the trade-off for open space. I think that's for -- in an urban setting.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: If you allow me. This is not a variance in the sense that there's a hardship there for any different setback. It is actually a proactive way of creating high-quality public space. That's why it has the percentages, and it speaks of certain types of public space. Now, it could be written more artfully. I think, certainly, we could make that more clear that the purpose of this is to do urban design quality public space. I think that probably we could include. But it's not the same concept as a variance.

Chairperson Pardo: Well, I think also on the project that Mr. Behar brought as an example, you all -- that particular property is almost a double frontage property, correct, Mr. Behar?

Board Member Behar: That's correct.

Chairperson Pardo: And because of that...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: There are three -- actually, three frontages.

Board Member Behar: Three streets.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: Right, three streets. So, again, you know, I don't think -- in my personal opinion, I think that it has to be crafted in such a way...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: That it's not point blank. I think that you may run into a project like that every once in a blue moon. You're not going to run into it every day. The message, in my opinion, which I think, you know, Mr. Bermello was talking about the precedent on is that the problem is that once you put this in here, it becomes your guidelines. In other words, that's the normal. This is not the normal. I understand where Mr. Behar is coming from. And the issue is, I think we all agree that you want to be able to have -- you want to have that in your utility box to be able to use when you need to. And the issue is that to promote that I don't think it has to be that there's a formula because each side is so unique that it can...

Board Member Behar: Yeah, but otherwise, if you eliminate it, you're going to be forced to go before the Board of Adjustment for a variance, which you don't have a case for.

Chairperson Pardo: No, no, and I made that argument. I said this is -- having sat on the Board of Adjustment, this is the one thing -- I think that the way that it's written presently is poor.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I agree.

Chairperson Pardo: But I understand that there has to be relief, but it be for the public benefit, quoting Mr. Bermello. And I think the public benefit is extremely important for people to understand to allow flexibility...

Board Member Behar: But for example...

Chairperson Pardo: For the public benefit.

Board Member Behar: If you look at C, types of open space. Types of open space shall be in the form of courtyards, plaza, arcades/loggias, pedestrian pass-throughs, you know, adjacent/contiguous to rights-of-way. So, that itself is telling you, you have to do open spaces, you know, which is going to be in the benefit -- you know, public's benefit.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. And I think that if it were rewritten properly, in my opinion, it could be done in one or two sentences without the A,B,C. And in fact, the one thing that I have a real issue with, with the 400 square feet on the plaza issue, you have very small buildings where 400 square feet is a lot. And you have enormous buildings that 400 square feet is nothing.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah, I was going to comment on that. To me, the 400 is the one that throws me off. But I agree if we can clean this up artfully...

Board Member Behar: Yes.

Board Member Bermello: I'll be more than supportive of this. Because the 400 feet -- if you have a 50 by 120-foot lot, that may be too much. But if you're the owner of the Plaza, 400 feet doesn't start to cut it.

Chairperson Pardo: That's nothing.

Board Member Bermello: So, I think that's the issue. I think we're trying to, in exchange for a setback reduction where you're getting so much in the public realm, I'm good for that with all -- you know, mentioning the courtyard, the pass-throughs. All those things make sense. But the 400 square feet I would get away from.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. And the other thing is, Mr. Trias, the problem is that we have already, you know, the pass-through, if the block is X amount of length and -- it's too open. It has to be in such a way that an applicant can say, "I'm requesting this because of this..."

Board Member Behar: But I'm giving this.

Chairperson Pardo: "But I'm giving that." So, I think...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I think...

Chairperson Pardo: That one of the terms which Mr. Bermello brought up is the benefit.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: The public benefit. And I think public benefit should be part of that. The other thing...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And it should be public benefit in terms of design and open space and urban -- maybe we could list that because...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Behar: I think if we rewrote this in a better polished way, I think it will be acceptable to it. But I am also...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Okay.

Board Member Behar: And we said it last time -- I don't like the prescription of the 400 square feet. I -- because if I'm dealing with one acre, 400 square feet is nothing.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I think -- I didn't write that and I don't know who wrote it. But I think that's there just to say that some marginal, little space, that doesn't count, so that's why they put in some minimum.

Chairperson Pardo: A baseline.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, but however, I agree with all of you.

Board Member Bermello: And I would make it broad because, for example, public art. I mean when they -- think about things of high value in the Gables. When they did the -- when the Foundation did the umbrella, you know, on Giralda, it wasn't adding open space, but it was certainly activating open space that was pretty much dead. It brought it alive, not only for our residents, but people and visitors. You saw more selfies and more photos, you know, highlighting the best of what we have to offer. So, in something like this, there may be someone that comes up with great public art, you know. If you think of Hudson Yards and the stair that everybody goes up, you know, what would you describe that? It's a structure. It's not a playground.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: IT's very controversial.

Board Member Bermello: You know, it is controversial. But let me tell you. I mean, I -- most people I've heard, you know, they want to go there, like you would go, you know, to the Statue Liberty. So, I think those things have value and they may not fit nicely into a plaza or a courtyard, but they certainly activate the public realm. And that's kind of like there's so many spaces that people do a leftover plaza and it's dead. It's like an asterisk. And I think what we want to have is wonderful places for people to enjoy, see.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The advice that I give to anyone is that zoning has very limited scope. The reality is that there's so much more that can be done. In other words, like the things you're talking about that are not actually prescriptive things that you would find in a zoning

code. I think zoning should do whatever it does. And you're doing a great job, by the way, in terms of making it better in terms of the language. And then we should emphasize that the architect, the City Architect, the Board of Architects, like you've explained many times, Mr. Pardo, they need to do a great job at expanding with zoning. Zoning gives us maybe 10 percent. I mean, the rest of it is something that design and review will bring us.

Chairperson Pardo: And I think also, to be very, very clear, very clear, not only for (INAUDIBLE) again my friend, for the public benefit, but also, compatibility.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes, yes.

Chairperson Pardo: In the specific example that Mr. Behar has -- which is an excellent example -- it is on a road -- a state road that has 60,000 cars going through it in each way every single day. That is not the same as if that were bumped up against a low-density residential area.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: Very different. So I think...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And...

Chairperson Pardo: Compatibility for the public benefit should be put in there so when the Board of Architects and the City Architect looks at it, they have a very good guideline. And so it doesn't get abused where people think that this is a free-for-all.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah. And I think, like I said, I think that enforcement and review, if we could have some language that talks about the fact that that has to happen, that will be very helpful.

Board Member Behar: I propose that we modify the language , you know, to something that is acceptable to our City Attorney and everybody in this board, and -- but we keep a portion of that.

Board Member Bermello: I would like to ask the City Attorney if he's capturing the thoughts here, because I think what we're saying is we're keeping Section 1, building setback reductions, and to keep it very flexible that what we want to get in return is open space, which can take the form of courtyard, loggias, et cetera, et cetera. It's all written out. That we don't want to have the prescription of the 400 square feet or a percentage, and that the guiding principle is that there must be a public benefit and compatibility with the surroundings. Gus, are you capturing the spirit of that, and you can maybe prepare something that you can put up on the screen later so that when we leave here tonight, we can say that we don't have to see this document again? Or you think you should send it to us later tonight and we each send you a note saying, "Yes, this is -- reflects what we decided?" Although I am listening to everything that everyone is saying and I'm trying to take notes of that, I do not want any language on this final product to be my language. I want that language to be the Board's language. So, you tell me you removed B and add C, or whatever changes. I will make those changes. But I don't want them to be left up to myself or to staff to make our interpretation of the Board's intent.

Chairperson Pardo: Gus, let me make a suggestion that maybe will be acceptable to the Committee. Mr. Trias, maybe you can, while you're sitting there concentrating on what we're doing, maybe you could come up with a very simple paragraph that we could then listen to and see if we could kick it around. And then that way we could proceed with the rest of the document.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I can but I don't think I should because of the same reason that the Attorney said. I mean, this really needs to come from you.

Chairperson Pardo: That's fine.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: If at some point you need more help, I'll be happy to provide it.

Chairperson Pardo: Alright. What I would suggest...

Board Member Bermello: So...

Chairperson Pardo: So, what I would suggest now is that...

Board Member Bermello: May I suggest then articulating an idea for Gus to write down? And if you like it, we can vote it or we can adapt it or modify it...

Board Member Behar: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: So we have something. Because I get that none of them want to say they were coauthor or author of the language, and I get it. I understand their position. They're -- that's not their role, so...

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Bermello: Do you want to --? By the way, this wasn't my item, so -- but I'm happy to put something up and see if you guys agree.

City Architect Riesco: So, let me just clarify something, going back to what you just said, Mr. Bermello. So, the percentage is also going to be deleted? Or are we going to have a minimum percentage that we're going to work from?

Board Member Behar: I think the percentage you eliminate.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah.

Board Member Behar: There's no -- and then every case is different. So, you know, now it's subject to the review by the Board of Architects, by the City Architect, by the Planning Department to make sure it's compatible and acceptable.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: A practical point of view. Sometimes the discussion in the board is not specific enough. In other words, sometimes they forget to talk about Table 3, even though they meant to. So, we need to have a review process where the Board of Architects talks about each of the elements and approves them or not deliberately. Right now, I think sometimes it's not as clear. So, that's why I would say some language that maybe says...

Board Member Bermello: Well...

Chairperson Pardo: (INAUDIBLE).

Board Member Bermello: I think the issue is -- to be very clear -- and I would say the reduction in setbacks -- that's -- if we read the language, setbacks may be reduced to zero-foot setbacks on all property lines subject to the following. And I would suggest the applicant providing public open space of high public benefit, which is compatible with its surroundings, and which may include but is not limited to plazas, courtyards, pedestrian pass-throughs, arcades/loggias, and other similar urban design features.

Board Member Behar: I think that's...

Board Member Bermello: And I think if we do that, you have the flexibility that you're looking for. The BOA realizes that that they must check that box, and they'll look for that open space in whatever form. And if your project has seven acres, you're going to ask for a lot, you know. And

if they got a small property, you're going to be very, very modest because you know it can't be a burden. I mean, I think that's the concept.

Chairperson Pardo: Willy, let me throw this out there if you don't mean.

Board Member Bermello: Pardon?

Chairperson Pardo: Let me throw this out if you don't mind.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah, absolutely. This was just a suggestion.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay. Reduction in setbacks. Some relief of setbacks as reviewed by the Board of Architects and City Architect may be granted for the public benefit while maintaining compatibility with surrounding through the use of compensating, then open space, et cetera, et cetera.

Board Member Bermello: That's fine with me.

Chairperson Pardo: So, let's list that open space. What were the others that you mentioned, Willy?

Board Member Bermello: Well, in open space, I said including, but not limited to -- and basically, using a lot of the same language that you have here, but maybe opening it up a little bit more because there may be other things. I mean, if someone says, "I included a waterscape," you know, that may not fall -- someone could say, "I don't think a waterscape is open space." You know, you can get into that whole deliberation, you know. And a waterscape could be beautiful. I mean, it could be just majestic. You see it in embassies and other places, so you know...

Chairperson Pardo: So, it sounds okay, as long as we just put it in -- okay, Gus?

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I'm here.

Chairperson Pardo: Gus, are you there? Okay.

Unidentified Speaker: There he is.

Chairperson Pardo: So, reduction in setbacks. And you could massage it anyway you think there -- some relief of setbacks may be granted for the public benefit while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding uses by providing compensation -- addition comp -- by providing compensation of additional open space and reviewed by the Board of Architects and City Architect -- or granted by. I don't know which one you would rather use.

Board Member Bermello: Mr. Chair, I think the only thing I would tweak there is when you say compatibility of uses. I think...

Chairperson Pardo: The compatibility of neighborhoods maybe?

Board Member Bermello: I would say maybe urban context because I think...

Board Member Behar: Urban context.

Board Member Bermello: You want to go beyond just whether it's the same use. You want to go in terms of the scale, the density, the height. That's really what -- I mean, a lot of -- I mean, you tell me if I'm wrong.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: My advice would be to follow Mr. Bermello's idea. Urban design is very important. When you talk about use, it gets into the planning issues and it's a little more complicated and less useful, frankly, from the point of view of the review at the Board of Architects.

Board Member Bermello: Right.

Chairperson Pardo: Alright. Gus, you have enough there?

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I think we can make that work.

Chairperson Pardo: Alright. Thank you, sir. Mr. Bermello.

Board Member Behar: I'm good with that.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, Mr. Bermello, good?

Board Member Bermello: Yeah. Should we make a motion to approve that?

Chairperson Pardo: No. I think he's already got everything there.

Board Member Bermello: Okay, so we're good with those?

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah, we're good to go. We're good to go.

Board Member Bermello: So, Mr. Chair, with that, there was a comment I had sent earlier in the week that now...

Chairperson Pardo: Yes.

Board Member Bermello: Is extinguished because we do have a Table 3.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Bermello: And my comment was that I thought if we deleted Table 3, there would be no reference of Table 3 within the document. But now that we keep the Table 3, my first comment is now...

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, very good.

Board Member Bermello: Null and void.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, very good. Thank you. If you don't mind, if we could go for a minute to the first page, 5-1. I would simply like to reorder under A(1), Purpose, if you don't mind, I would like to make A what is presently C; B what is presently D; C what is presently A; and D what is presently B, simply changing the order. They're all there. The verbiage hasn't changed, but I think it makes more sense when you read it that way. Is that okay with everyone?

Board Member Bermello: For me, the reordering is fine.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Behar: I don't have a problem.

Board Member Bermello: Not an issue.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay. Alright, then...

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Mr. Chair, just to confirm. Does that match with the current note on the document, the new order? Being C is A, B is...

Chairperson Pardo: B is C. C is A. And D, as in David, is B, as in boy. One more time?

Unidentified Speaker: Yeah.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Just the first two, please.

Chairperson Pardo: The existing A would be C, as in Charlie. B, as in boy, would be D, as in David. C, as in Charlie, would be A, as in apple. D, as in David, would be B, as in boy.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: All set.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, thank you. The Chair recognizes the residence of Mr. Mitch Alvarez. Welcome. Okay. So, what we did is on 3, we struck everything out except the first section. And we changed the verbiage to include the ability to provide relief of certain setbacks as approved by the Board of Architects and the City Architect when there is a public benefit, and that it is compatible with surrounding areas. Okay, just wanted to bring you up to speed. That's all you missed. Okay. And then we just changed the order of the first paragraph. Just A, B, C and D. We just changed that around. Okay, I'm sharing -- alright, so -- changed this to A, B (INAUDIBLE). Same verbiage. Okay. Alright, so Page 5-2, there were no changes that we discussed at the last meeting. 5-3, there were no changes that we discussed at the last meeting. 5-4, I just wanted to note that under Table 1, under architectural elements and amenities at street level, I -- this is Table 1. Under Table 1, I think that there should be a check next to residential. You see that there's a blank box there. And this is architectural elements and amenities at street level. Okay, do you agree? That way it's giving a message that, you know, landscaping is okay for residential in the front because it's optional. You don't have to have all three. You just have to have one of them. On Page 5...

Board Member Bermello: The only one there that doesn't make -- is little A, because it talks about retail uses...

Chairperson Pardo: Correct, but it says...

Board Member Bermello: Which will be...

Chairperson Pardo: In commercial areas.

Board Member Bermello: Right.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: So, it says in commercial...

Board Member Bermello: I think your concept here is simply to introduce the concept of the landscaping.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct.

Board Member Bermello: Okay, I...

Chairperson Pardo: The concept of the landscaping...

Board Member Bermello: That makes sense.

Chairperson Pardo: And the pedestrian features.

Board Member Bermello: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: So, on 5-5, the only thing I think we have to do is just renumber based on the deleted items. So, Gus, are you with me?

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: That's fine. At this point, I don't think that's part of the initial assessment -- the initial ordinance. That'll be done on the final product because I'd like for the Commission to see exactly what numbers are being changed and what items are being removed.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, very good.

Board Member Bermello: Are you on page 5-5 right now?

Chairperson Pardo: That was 5-5.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: So, on 5-6, I think that there are a couple of issues on the second sentence of C. The allowable stories shall -- where it says, "be limited," in my opinion, it should say, "not exceed." And then I would strike "to" on the next line. So, it would read, "The allowable stories shall not exceed the applicable Comprehensive Plan map designation." And then instead of saying "and," I think it should say, "per the height as regulated by the Zoning Code." I think it makes more sense.

Board Member Bermello: I don't know about the others, but I'm fine with those...

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Bermello: Modifications, Chair.

Chairperson Pardo: Alright.

Board Member Behar: Semantics.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, on the graph of D, as in David, on the right side that is grayed, where it says, "Additional stories/feet available for all types of architectural design," I think "all types of" -- based on what we discussed last week -- should be changed "for Coral Gables Mediterranean style architectural design." And Mr. Trias.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes, sir.

Chairperson Pardo: On the -- on that particular graph on the height, which is zoned here under D, as in David, on page 5-6 -- Do you have it available or --? I could give you my copy.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I don't have it available.

Chairperson Pardo: I could give you my copy if you'd like.

City Architect Riesco: My copy is all marked up though. You want to...?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: I had two questions for you. The first one was...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Which page was that? I'm sorry.

City Architect Riesco: 5-7.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: 5-7, yes.

Chairperson Pardo: 5-6.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I have it here.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay. You notice that under MX1 in the Zoning Code, it has for also lots up to 2,500 square feet. It's missing from this graph. Under MX1, in the Zoning Code it says 2,500 square feet. So, we're missing a line there in this graph.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I...

Chairperson Pardo: If you see the (INAUDIBLE)...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No, I understand what you're saying. But I do think that that's a deliberate choice. So, if you want to make a different policy choice, that's a recommendation you're making.

Chairperson Pardo: No, I'm a little confused. I'm just -- if it was deliberate, I'd like to know why it was deliberately left out.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, it was deliberately left out so that the smaller parcels wouldn't qualify for the additional...

Chairperson Pardo: For the 45 feet in the Med bonus.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Right, right, exactly. That's why it's there.

Chairperson Pardo: And I'm sorry, but in my opinion, it should say MX1, 2,500 square feet, not applicable.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Okay, no, that's fine.

Chairperson Pardo: In my opinion, because if not, there's like, "Was this a mistake or not?"

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No, it's -- this was deliberate and...

Chairperson Pardo: That's fine.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And I go back to the little (INAUDIBLE) that in the past, it was 20,000, so the 10,000 was a new...

Chairperson Pardo: A benchmark.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, a new benchmark.

Chairperson Pardo: That's fine because the thing is, when you go to the MX2 down below, you have the 2,500 feet there.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, and...

Chairperson Pardo: And then for the MX3 also.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And if you look closely, you can see that it's different number of stories; five stories at 2,500, seven stories at 10,000. So, there was an attempt to have a more nuanced transition.

Chairperson Pardo: In my humble opinion, I would think it would be better to say not applicable, the same as you've done in other parts of the Code.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's a very good point. Very good point.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay. Now, since you're here, I have a bone to pick.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: Because the Zoning Code says clearly 45 feet.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: And in another part of the Code in the other table, it incorrectly says 50 feet. And Mr. Behar last week thought that he needed better eyeglasses, and then apparently, I found this discrepancy. And I think that that should be addressed.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I thought I explained it last time, but maybe I didn't. The 50 feet is in the comp plan, and it's not 45 feet. You're right. I don't know why, but we are aware of the fact that it's different.

Chairperson Pardo: I'm glad you mentioned the comp plan because I have a copy of it here. And populated in the comp plan -- we have the comp plan, and we have the Zoning Code.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: And there are discrepancies the way that the text component of -- in the element is written. There are some discrepancies here. But...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: Unless I'm misunderstanding -- I went and I did the math on every single one. Every single one, I did the math. Simple math. And when I did the math, the MF2, 10,000 square foot is perfect; 83.5, if you get at that one level. When you go to MF4 -- I did the math -- 163.5 feet, perfect math. Every time that it was -- per the Zoning Code, the 70, the 150, it was correct. But every time there was a 45 foot. It was incorrect. But every time there was a 45 foot, it was incorrect.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: My opinion is that it says clearly in the land use element in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan that you go by the Zoning Code and then you add the feet. There's a delta of five feet there, where it's a 45 foot. So, if you want to change the Zoning Code, go ahead and change it to 50 feet. But right now...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I think...

Chairperson Pardo: The way that this works is with 45 feet plus the (INAUDIBLE).

Board Member Behar: But that's a change to the Zoning Code, which...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Board Member Behar: Would have to be addressed...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: What I would recommend is that if you feel very strongly about it, make a recommendation to change the Zoning Code to 50 so everything is consistent.

Board Member Behar: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: But right now, it says clearly, not only on the map, but it also says it in the text that it's per the Zoning Code. The Zoning Code says 45 feet. It doesn't say 50 feet.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Okay.

Board Member Behar: But what's harder to change?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No, no, no. The...

Chairperson Pardo: No, I'm just saying because this chart -- what we're doing today, Robert, is the Zoning Code. This is the Zoning Code. This is not the comp plan.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Right, the -- but let me say -- let me correct the record or clarify the record. What the comp plan says is up to 50 feet maximum. So, it says 50 -- that's what it says.

Board Member Bermello: No, the comp plan gives you maximums. It doesn't prescribe -- the comp plan.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's what the future land use says. Now, I understand you feel very strongly about this. And my suggestion is, yes, there is an issue, and it could be corrected. And the correction will be to change it to 50. I don't think it makes a big difference. It doesn't give you an extra story, but it gives you enough flexibility in terms of the quality of the stories.

Chairperson Pardo: You know, I have a real difference of opinion with you on this.

Board Member Behar: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, and the reason is because words mean things. And when I look at the future land use element...

Board Member Behar: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: Which is the text interpretation of the map -- actually, the map rules, but then you have this document also. Everything that I highlighted on these 11 pages, everything I highlighted is problematic because there are certain things that have issues here. I'm just trying to get through this section, so we get this thing right.

Board Member Behar: Then, Mr. Chairman, I think what you do is we make a recommendation to fix one of them. You know, there is a contradiction and there's no question.

Chairperson Pardo: Exactly.

Chairperson Pardo: So, I agree, Mr. Behar, there's no doubt. I don't want to stress...

Board Member Behar: But we're beating a dead horse here that I don't think we're going to be able to do anything...

Chairperson Pardo: No.

Board Member Behar: On this right now.

Chairperson Pardo: That's correct, but I feel very uncomfortable recommending something that's wrong to the City Commission. I think that either they're all right, or they're all wrong. The problem is that some of them are right, and then some of them are wrong. So, what I'm saying is that I think that when you add this, you should specifically add it according to the Zoning Code. And if you change the Zoning Code, then it ultimately changes this chart for the bonuses

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. What I would say is that one of the most controversial things that were done in the recent update of the Zoning Code was to actually specify the number of stories clearly for all of the different...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Because before, it wasn't like that. Before it was -- it said you get an additional one story or three stories, but it didn't say specifically...

Chairperson Pardo: No.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: 14 (INAUDIBLE).

Chairperson Pardo: No, no. And it says clearly...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: In the future land use element, it says clearly in parenthesis, no limitation on floors. In other words, the height is there and then no limitation on floors. Let's say we have two architects and they're designing two buildings, and they choose to make -- you know, maybe it's a big department store and they have, you know, basically a 30-foot high first floor, and then a second floor, which is the same. But they end up with ten floors, compared to 15 floors.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Sure.

Chairperson Pardo: So, the height is there. I mean, for me, the comp plan does three things. It provides a ceiling for height, use, and intensity. So...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It also -- in this case, in our case, it also talks about number of floors, and that's where the problem is.

Chairperson Pardo: Well, and the thing is that it says here over and over again in the comp plan, per the Zoning Code, per the Zoning Code, per the Zoning Code. So, the height is based on the Zoning Code. Like I said before, I did the math. I did the math. And everything except the ones that are 45 foot -- per the Zoning Code -- all of them, the numbers match. I'm simply saying, that, unfortunately saying here plus one story, 13.5 equal five story/63.5 feet. The math is wrong by five feet.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Then it should be corrected by 5 feet. I agree with you, and I agree also with Mr. Behar. I think that you should make a recommendation to the Commission to fix it.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah, and the whole point is that, for me, I don't want to put forward a mistake. In my perspective, this is a simple mistake. But the thing is that that should be corrected at this level because we're providing -- this is the one that has to do with the bonuses that give the height, so that's really the point that I was trying to make because this is wrong. So, I don't want to belabor this anymore. And you know, we've got to get this right in my opinion. Thank you. On the next page, 5-7, on the Level 2 bonus on 5-7, if you look up (INAUDIBLE) Level 2 bonus, it says, "All applications desiring bonuses shall meet the minimum requirements of Table 2." I think we should just clean it up a little bit where it should say...

Board Member Bermello: Mr. Chair, where is that you're reading?

Chairperson Pardo: Oh, I'm sorry. Page 5-7.

Board Member Bermello: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: The top, the very top.

Board Member Bermello: At the very top?

Chairperson Pardo: You see it's missing e dot -- E period, Level 2 bonuses. If you go to the previous page, that's D. E was not printed on there for some reason. The top should say -- I wrote it by hand -- E. Level 2 bonus. Then number 1. It says, "All applications desiring bonuses shall meet the minimum requirements of Table 2." I think it should say clearly, "All applications desiring Level 2 bonuses shall meet the minimum requirements of Table 1 and Table 2 in order to earn a bonus under these provisions." You see it just says bonuses. It's not referring to Level 2 bonuses. It should be clear. That's one of the things is the tables are there, but the level of bonuses aren't clear there.

Board Member Behar: But you're not getting to the Table 2 yet. This is pertaining to...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Behar: The top only.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah, (INAUDIBLE).

Board Member Behar: So, you should not mix...

Chairperson Pardo: No, no, no. It said -- if you look at the previous one -- take a look, Robert, at the previous page C. It calls out Level 1 bonus. Be consistent. The other one should be Level 2 bonus. It's not in order with the table, Robert. It's completely out of order, but that's okay because the tables are the tables, and the bonuses are the bonuses. There's no mention anywhere with Level 2 bonus.

Board Member Behar: So, it says to call it Level 2 bonus.

Chairperson Pardo: Absolutely. Because once you're at...

Board Member Bermello: You're saying that...

Chairperson Pardo: You can't get to 2 unless you...

(MUTIPLE PARTIES SPEAKING IN UNISON.)

Board Member Bermello: Paragraph D to be like paragraph C. Paragraph C introduced Table 1. And you're saying Paragraph D should introduce Table 2.

Chairperson Pardo: Well...

Board Member Bermello: And in addition, say that when you're going for the Table 2 bonuses, just because you also comply with the Table 1 bonuses. It's not that you...

Chairperson Pardo: Correct.

Board Member Bermello: Skipped over one.

Chairperson Pardo: Because Level 2 bonus is...

Board Member Bermello: Right.

Chairperson Pardo: You have complied with Level 1 in order...

Board Member Bermello: I think that clarification makes sense.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: What about the top of 5-9 that has Paragraph E, Level 2 bonuses?

City Architect Riesco: At the bottom of Table 2.

Chairperson Pardo: 5-9, you said?

Unidentified Speaker: It's actually (INAUDIBLE).

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: 5-9 -- on my page it's 5-9, but it's E, Level 2 bonuses.

Board Member Behar: Yeah, that's in 5-8, in the bottom of 5-8.

City Architect Riesco: Bottom of 5-8, yeah, right after Table 2, the completion of Table 2, which is letter E.

Board Member Behar: At the end of the table.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Oh, that's where it is. Alright.

Board Member Behar: So, what happened is D should maybe move -- or this language should move before the table or, you know, D, move it after the table. Because this is...

Chairperson Pardo: Very confusing.

Board Member Behar: This is not E. It should be D, D-1, D-2.

Board Member Bermello: You know, the way that Table 1 is done, it's confusing. But if we're going to be similar to it, then we have to -- we can't do what you're suggesting, Mr. Chair, because it would throw it out of whack.

Chairperson Pardo: Actually -- and you're right, Robert -- the table should happen after 1 and 2. That first table should happen after 1 and 2.

Unidentified Speaker: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: The way that it's presented -- Do you see that, Mr. Trias?

Board Member Behar: Yeah, but I think it's clear that D was supposed to -- and what followed D should go before the table.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I think anything you do to make it more clear is better. And redundancy is fine. I mean, just do it as many times as you feel comfortable with.

Board Member Bermello: Again, I don't think it's a problem if Item E, Mr. Chair, you simply call that table -- you're introducing Table 2.

Chairperson Pardo: I'm sorry, Mr. Trias. Say that again.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No, I think it says Level 2 bonuses. If you want to say it again on Table 2, that's fine. I mean, I don't see any...

Chairperson Pardo: When you have the Level 1 bonuses, the graph below it is correct.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: But unfortunately, the way that the pagination works -- right?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: That maybe this should be above where you have -- see, and the funny thing is that under 1, it refers to -- and this is what's confusing, Robert. Up above, you see where it says, "All applications desiring bonuses shall meet the minimum requirements of Table 2." So, it's kind of like in a quagmire. You know, it's in a no-man's land there. Where does that belong? Up above or down below?

Board Member Behar: I think that's just...

Board Member Bermello: I think what it's missing is under these Table 2 provisions, which is kind of like a (INAUDIBLE) here -- but I don't see a problem in trying to understand that Item 1 and 2 on 5-7 is really dealing with Table 2 and not dealing with Table 1. I think that's really all that we're talking about.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, so I would...

Board Member Bermello: That could be the...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I mean if it's an issue of graphic design...

Board Member Bermello: I think it's an issue of graphic design. (INAUDIBLE) new section.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: We could work on it. It certainly...

Chairperson Pardo: Can you fix it?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes. I mean, we're not going to change any of the content. I would request that you focus on the content...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And then make a recommendation for the graphic design, and we can work on it.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. So, the last thing I want to bring up, because I want to get to a very important subject now. And that is that under Table 2 where it says, "Architectural and Public Realm Standards," I think we had agreed that instead of "realm," we would be using the word "amenities," public amenity standards.

Board Member Bermello: Where are you, Mr. Chair?

Chairperson Pardo: The gray part where it says Table 2 on 5-7.

Board Member Bermello: Oh, yes.

Chairperson Pardo: To of the chart.

Unidentified Speaker: Right, architectural and public...

Unidentified Speaker: Very top of the chart.

Board Member Bermello: The header, the header.

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Bermello: Architectural and Public Realm Standards.

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Bermello: Right, okay.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay. So, I'd like to skip -- if you don't mind and...

Board Member Bermello: You're changing that to "amenities?" Is that the concept?

Chairperson Pardo: I'm sorry?

Board Member Bermello: To change...

City Architect Riesco: Realm to amenities.

Chairperson Pardo: Realm...

Board Member Bermello: Correct.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct because they're called out as amenities everywhere else.

Board Member Bermello: So, public amenity standards?

Chairperson Pardo: Public amenity standards, yes.

Board Member Bermello: That's fine.

Chairperson Pardo: And then one other thing. I'd like to go back -- I'm going to skip here because we're going to lose Mr. Behar in just a few minutes. I'd like to skip to 5-9 for a minute and discuss something that was brought up by Mr. Bermello. He had sent an email to the City Attorney and - with a concept, which is intriguing to say the least, that had been discussed before. And -- there you go. So, in this concept -- I'm going to have Mr. Bermello actually read it into the record, if you don't mind, and I only have one question. And we could discuss that after you -- yes, sir.

Board Member Bermello: So, if I may read it into record. The idea is to include this paragraph after Section H, which follows Table 2, and it would read the following: Optional standards. Applications that comply with both Table 1 and Table 2 bonuses, but which reduce the residential unit density by 50 percent, while providing for double the required front setback requirements and use not more than 90 percent of the maximum permitted -- I forgot here "building height," sorry - include building height -- shall...

Chairperson Pardo: I'm sorry. Include what?

Board Member Bermello: Building height.

Chairperson Pardo: Building height.

Board Member Bermello: In other words, that stay 10 percent under the allowed building height. Shall earn an additional .5 FAR to promote family-style opportunities in the MF2, MF3, and MF4 districts.

Chairperson Pardo: And this prohibits it being used for MX.

Board Member Bermello: Yes.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Keep in mind, MX, most of the time, doesn't have a limit in density, so that wouldn't be an issue.

Chairperson Pardo: So...

Board Member Bermello: The concept here, Mr. Chair, is to -- in the residential districts...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Bermello: To provide -- let me backtrack. The Code that we're dealing with historically has pushed the development industry into providing as many small units as you possibly can to maximize density. It's a given fact of life. The trends historically in communities as they mature is that people start to oppose that growth because of the ensuing traffic as areas densify. So, this concept is to provide, not a requirement -- so it's an option -- but it provides the option that says, if you're willing to do half the number of units and you're not going to maximize the building height and you provide more front open space than what is required in terms of setbacks, you're allowed to increase your FAR while you're complying with everything else. What that does is it allows for larger units for families, as opposed to what you see throughout America, which is an anti-family move, okay, of the micro-units and the studios, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. I think this community is different. I've lived here for more than 40 years. I got seven grandchildren and I don't plan to go anywhere else. But I'd like to propose this ordinance, or this change within the Mediterranean style as long as you comply with Level 1 and Level 2, you fully comply, but you take advantage of the fact that you do half the density, you don't go the full height, you provide more open space on your front yards, and you get an extra .5 FAR. What that does is it promotes homes. It promotes three- and four-bedrooms style. If you go into the Gables to look for a four-bedroom unit anywhere, you're not going to find it. Mr. Trias knows this.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Sure.

Board Member Bermello: And the reason that you don't find it is because our Code penalizes any developer that tries to even go there. So, this provides -- again, this is not a straitjacket. This is not telling every developer you have to do this. But I think we would be surprised by the fact that having this, the developer will say, "You know what, for the time being, I'm going to have people that are going to come and applaud me in a presentation," because I'm not going to be the tallest. I'm not going to have the highest number of trips that are generated, which is usually what happens here. People end up having to hire a traffic planner to appease the neighbors that you're not going to create, you know, additional trips. This will create negative trips, negative trips. So, as I -- if...

Board Member Behar: I think you're -- I think I'm a hundred percent in favor of this because it does promote larger units. Less units, but larger units. I think it does promote kind of more family-style units. And I think the allowable -- the 50 percent is good. I think the height is good. I just -- the only thing that I don't see when it says double the required setback. That may be -- no, I would say additional setback. But I'm not sure that the double -- depending on your lot width, that may not...

Board Member Bermello: Maybe double is asking too much, but an increased setback, and without getting into percentages. Let's say that your setback is 15 feet, or you know, 20 feet. Increase it, not just meet minimums.

Chairperson Pardo: Well, let me ask you this, are there going to be any situations where you have double, 2, times zero? Mr. Trias.

Board Member Bermello: What is double, 2, times zero?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I don't understand the question.

Chairperson Pardo: In other words, the front setback is zero, so two times zero -- double zero is zero.

Board Member Bermello: Oh. No, I don't think -- Do we have zero in any residential area?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No, if Table 3 were to be applied, for example. I mean, I guess that's the issue that you're raising, right?

Board Member Bermello: See, I was the proponent for no Table 3, but I...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Right.

Board Member Bermello: So, I never envisioned...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No, but I think...

Board Member Bermello: I mean, that's cute. Two times zero is zero. But that's not what I had in mind.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The way you have phrased it is additional setback from what's required.

Board Member Bermello: Correct.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: So, I don't think that that issue would apply.

Board Member Bermello: But I mean, Mr. Behar may be correct. I mean, doubling in certain areas where you have a small lot may be...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: But it's only for MF2. It's only for the multifamily zoning.

Board Member Bermello: Yes, only for the multifamily residential.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: They all have setbacks in the front.

Board Member Behar: If you provide -- if you require an increase, that means you're giving more than the minimum, but it's not limiting you to (INAUDIBLE). What I do like about this is that you're going to provide larger units, but less units.

Board Member Bermello: Correct, correct.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Let's keep all of the discussions in the public. It's very important.

Chairperson Pardo: So, getting back to this point, I think that any time you give a bonus, you should have at least the minimum. When it comes to setbacks, in your mind...

Board Member Bermello: My mind the public benefit here, if somebody said, "Well, Willy, what's the public benefit of this?" I'll give you three. Number one, less density. Number two, less height. And number three, more increased open space on the front yard.

Chairperson Pardo: I'm sorry. I'm sold.

Board Member Bermello: So, I mean, that -- I mean, to me this is an easy one to explain to my next-door neighbor. You know, and they'll immediately say, "Wow, why didn't we do that before?"

Chairperson Pardo: No, I think this is great idea. The only thing -- what I meant to say is your -- what is the minimum as far as a concept? It has to be usable because its residential. It has to be useable. And we should apply a number because we're providing a bonus to do this, which has a public benefit. There's no doubt about that.

Board Member Bermello: Well, what I was suggesting -- but I'm willing to back off of -- well, I was suggesting doubling. So, if it's 10 feet, provide 20 feet; it's 15 feet, provide 30 feet. But I realize that that could then become -- it may become difficult to do. So, I'm willing to back off. I think the concept is give more greenery.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah, yeah.

Board Member Bermello: I mean, give more greenery.

Board Member Behar: (INAUDIBLE).

Board Member Bermello: And...

Board Member Behar: You're going to have less units, less density. That -- in any neighborhood, that's (INAUDIBLE)...

Board Member Bermello: But Robert, less density and less traffic.

Chairperson Pardo: Give me a number of feet.

Board Member Bermello: Less traffic. I mean...

Chairperson Pardo: No, no. Listen, we're...

Board Member Bermello: I mean, and I realize that some people will say that this is an...

Chairperson Pardo: I just want to have a minimum amount of that -- if you're going to promise -- you said double. Let's back off on double because we don't know -- it could be 30 feet, and then it becomes impossible to design.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah. I went double because, I mean, most people know what double is and it's not a percentage. But I'm willing to -- I mean, my -- the concept, again, Chair, was less height, less units, more greenery.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: It's a simple kind of like ABC that you could explain to a child.

Board Member Behar: I don't think we need to...

Board Member Bermello: And -- but...

Chairperson Pardo: I disagree. I think...

Board Member Behar: Set a number.

Chairperson Pardo: I think we have to set a number, and I'll tell you why. Let's think about this for a minute. The sidewalks are five feet normally. They could be six foot. They could be eight foot. They could be ten foot. The minimum sidewalk is five feet. For you to plant a tree in this green space, you have to have at least 10 or 15 feet. I'm just thinking of a minimum canopy.

Board Member Behar: Mr. Chair, we already have a setback requirement. If you were doing a building that you were not taking advantage of the bigger unit, (INAUDIBLE).

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Mr. Behar, please speak into the mic.

Board Member Behar: You could do the same building, but you know, this is -- the only thing this is doing is keeping that building with a little bit more. It's not telling you 10 percent, 50 percent. But what it's telling you is that you could do less units, just have a little bit more square footage.

Board Member Bermello: Maybe a compromise -- and I'm thinking -- and Mr. Trias will tell me if this would work or not. Let's say that your front setback is 15 feet and that your side setbacks are 5 feet. Under this thought process, the increase would be the adding of the side and the front to create an expanded front setback. So, your new setback will be 20 feet instead of 15 feet. So, it's not a doubling, but it's taking the measurement, the metric of the side setback and adding it to the front.

Chairperson Pardo: I would say that we...

Board Member Bermello: Why do I say that? Because typically the side setback is a function of the parcel plan and how big the property is. And I think that may be a much better metric than relying on percentages or like I pulled, you know, the double out of my -- you know, out of the air. So, I would say -- Would that be acceptable to you, Mr. Behar?

Board Member Behar: Say it again, Mr. Bermello. I'm sorry.

Board Member Bermello: So, instead of a doubling or instead of adding 50 percent, that the increase would be the sum of the front and the side setback. Usually, the side setbacks are the...

Board Member Behar: That's fine.

Board Member Bermello: Minimum.

Board Member Behar: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: So, it would be the sum of those two. But it still would be...

Board Member Behar: An increase.

Board Member Bermello: An increase over the existing setbacks.

Board Member Behar: I mean, maybe Mr. Trias is the one that best could give us, you know...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I think I would encourage some flexibility for the Board of Architects to find the right solution. Because I mean, at the end of that, we're looking for quality.

Board Member Bermello: Correct.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: We're not looking for arbitrary numbers. I mean, from my perspective, yeah, give me an arbitrary number. It's a checklist, great. That doesn't necessarily give you quality.

Board Member Bermello: I agree. I would, again, prefer for the Board of Architects to always review. I mean, maybe adding the two is not enough in this case. Maybe the adding of the two is sufficient in this case. So, I'm all for entrusting the Board of Architects and the City Architect both with this.

Chairperson Pardo: Let's bring this home. Hold on for just a minute. Mr. Trias...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: From a technical...

Chairperson Pardo: What is the front setback of an MF2, MF3, and MF4?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: For example, in the North Ponce, that would be 10 feet, MF2. And I think that's the one that is the tightest one. I don't recall -- I'd prefer to look at the Code for the other ones, but I can tell you that 10 feet is the MF2. Ten feet, for example. Okay, doubling of that to 15 feet -- whatever, 50 percent more or so...

Chairperson Pardo: I just don't want to add to...

Board Member Bermello: I mean, in 10 feet, you cannot even have the canopy of a tree.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah. And...

Board Member Bermello: Just to put it in perspective.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The idea was...

Board Member Bermello: You put an oak tree, you're pruning continuously because, you know, it doesn't -- it gets so...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: However...

Board Member Bermello: So, this is trying to get a little bit more greenery, Mr. Chair. And again, I realize I'm against prescription, so it's like talking against myself when I'm going against the doubling. But I can understand Mr. Behar's point that it may become a problem in certain areas. That's why I think I would, number one, introduce flexibility. Number two, as a guide -- maybe not a prescription -- that it be -- as a minimum -- the summation of the side and front setback if you're taking advantage of this section. You don't have to.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. But the other thing that you have to be careful with is sometimes the side setbacks are zero, right?

Board Member Bermello: Yes.

Unidentified Speaker: Right.

Chairperson Pardo: So, you know, are we --? Is this a placebo, you know? Let's not go down that path.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The technical aspect of this is that the comp plan doesn't regulate the FAR for the multifamily. It does regulate FAR for the mixed use and so on.

Board Member Bermello: Mixed use, correct.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: So, you can do it. You can actually do it because, in the comp plan, it just talks about density and multifamily; MF2, MF3, MF4. So, that incentive I think is very valuable. We've discussed that in the prior rewrite and so on.

Chairperson Pardo: But wait a minute. I think we're kind of dancing around over here. Let's get back to the front setback.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Sir, I'm trying to explain the issue.

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Trias, my biggest problem is that some of the streets in this city are very wide, but there are a lot of streets that are very narrow. So, now we're going in and we're providing less density, you know, a little bit bigger building, trying to keep people not going somewhere else because they don't have the square footage, like Mr. Bermello, so that's a good thing. But the thing

is also that maybe it should be done according to the right-of-way that you have to be able to expand it to be able to get those trees in there to make it more...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's (INAUDIBLE)...

Chairperson Pardo: Attractive...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: For people that are leaving their single-family homes with a 25-foot setback. I mean, for me, it's absurd that we can't come up with a number that would be minimal. If it's 15 feet, let's think about that. We'd put a tree. We plant it. It's going to eventually have a 20-, 22-inch caliper when it's really fully mature, so it'll be a foot and a half off the sidewalk. And if you have something where you don't have to take that tree and do what has happened to our trees under the FPL easements, and so it has a shape, it has the canopy, and it brings the quality of life, which is what Mr. Bermello's bringing.

Board Member Bermello: That might be a compromise in regards to coming back to it. Because in the MF districts, like Mr. Trias said, the front setback typically is from the 10-foot range. And when I said double it, that would make it 20. What you're suggesting is 15, which in a way...

Chairperson Pardo: I would think so because the canopy of the street...

Board Member Bermello: And that I'm saying might be...

Chairperson Pardo: Is going to go...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The point I wanted to make is that if you make it 20, then the parking may not work in MF2, which is the point that Mr. Behar was...

Board Member Behar: And we're having that issue right now.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah.

Board Member Behar: We're having those issues.

Chairperson Pardo: But again...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Those are the issues.

Chairperson Pardo: Maybe...

Board Member Bermello: No, I realize. That's why I'm all for the flexibility because I realize in certain situations where you're trying to fit your parking, the parking is a difficult challenge.

Chairperson Pardo: And you know, let's get back to the City plan. Some of these streets were never designed to have big buildings on them.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: The rights-of-way were never designed for that. Let's accept that, Mr. Trias. Let's also accept that our street trees through the single-family neighborhood, City trees sit on the middle of the swale. The swale is 10 foot wide to the edge of pavement -- from the sidewalk to the edge of pavement. If someone with a single-family home has to accommodate a City street tree there, I don't think that it's right for us to put a big building on a small street and then force them to say, "Well, the only way I could put the tree on is if I put it in the middle of the right-of-way on the pavement and take parking out." That doesn't make any sense to me. I cannot say enough great things about Mr. Bermello's idea of reduction of density, of providing a quality

product for people. But I think that maybe all the lots in this City aren't made for that type of product. Okay, and maybe...

Unidentified Speaker: Yeah, you're correct.

Chairperson Pardo: What it means is that maybe people should be looking for not just bigger lots in the area, but wider or something like that. So, I really do believe that I have, for example -- and I've said it over and over. Mr. Bermello did a great job on the parking garage across from Books & Books. And it flies over the sidewalk, and it provides protection for people leaving on a day like today, the way it was pouring today. But that's the middle of the CBD. And what we're talking about is not even mixed use. We're talking about multistory residential areas.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: Where we're trying to increase the quality of Mr. Bermello's idea of reduction in density and providing more square footage in those units. So, look, it's time to pony up. We need to have a minimum distance. And you know what, if you provide the parking and you do it a certain way and all that, that's great, but sometimes that lot isn't going to be deep enough to be able to do it.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Mr. Chairman, I think the only issue is finding the right setback, right? I mean, that's the only thing we...

Board Member Behar: That's it.

Chairperson Pardo: I would say it has to be at least 15 feet, in my opinion.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That would be a good recommendation.

Board Member Bermello: I'm accepting 15 feet. I don't have a problem with 15 feet.

Chairperson Pardo: I mean, and I would...

Board Member Bermello: I'm acceptable to that as a motion.

Chairperson Pardo: Willy, and I think with a minimum...

Board Member Behar: The minimum required is 10 feet.

Chairperson Pardo: Yes.

Board Member Behar: 15 feet. You got 50 percent increase.

Board Member Bermello: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah. It's not double, but it's almost there.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No. And in addition to continue the Chairman's idea, sometimes you have 50-foot right-of-way, sometimes you have 60. Sometimes, you know -- and that is the review process that takes place with the Board of Architects. That plus the 15 feet sounds like a lot to work with.

Board Member Behar: Mr. Bermello, if you're good -- since you're the proposer of this suggestion...

Board Member Bermello: So, could I read it again now with this modification?

Chairperson Pardo: Yes, sir. And one more thing, Mr. Bermello, if you don't mind. That was the cleaning up issue I was talking about. I would -- instead of making this I, what I would suggest strongly is that -- because you even said it during your conversation. You said, "Other Development Options." This should go on Table 3, which is called "Other Development Options," where we struck out all the other things that were superfluous.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I would recommend that, sir, yes.

Chairperson Pardo: You would not recommend it?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes, yes, I would.

Board Member Bermello: I'm fine with that.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Behar: See, that's the reason we kept Table 3.

Board Member Bermello: So, the wording would read something like this, and I guess -- Gus, are you there?

Chairperson Pardo: Gus fell asleep.

Board Member Bermello: There he is, there he is.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I am here. If you'd like I can share my screen.

Board Member Bermello: You're like the holy spirit; I know you're there. I can't see you, but you're there. Optional Standards. Applications that comply with both Table 1 and Table 2

bonuses, but which reduce the residential unit density allowed by 50 percent while providing for a 15-foot minimum front setback requirement and use not more than 90 percent of the maximum permitted building height shall earn an additional .5 FAR to promote family-style opportunities in the MF2, MF3, and MF4 districts.

Board Member Behar: May I suggest something? Can you say up to an additional -- not limited to -- it says an additional 50 percent -- right? -- on the FAR, .5 for the FAR? Up to. Shall earn an additional .5. How about if I...?

Chairperson Pardo: Up to. In other words, it's optional. You don't have to go there. I see what Mr. Behar...

Board Member Bermello: Oh, yeah, that's fine.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: Up to an additional .5.

Chairperson Pardo: Gus, did you get that?

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I did, but if you do that then that would make it the interpretation of the Board of Architects or the City Architect to not grant .5, but to grant .1 or .2 or .3.

Board Member Behar: No, no, no. Then...

Chairperson Pardo: No, no.

Board Member Behar: I take it back.

Board Member Bermello: Then forget it.

Board Member Behar: I take it back.

Board Member Bermello: Leave it the way...

Board Member Behar: Forget it.

Board Member Bermello: It was.

Board Member Behar: Forget it. Thank you for the clarification.

Board Member Bermello: Because this -- the person that does this is doing a lot already, cutting the project by half in density, not using 10 percent of the allowed building height, and increasing the setback. I don't know of any project that has done that here.

Board Member Behar: Well, the reason you haven't seen many is because the Code is not...

Board Member Bermello: It doesn't exist.

Board Member Behar: Intended to...

Board Member Bermello: And the Code is generating small units and we see it all over.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. Minimum of (INAUDIBLE).

Board Member Bermello: So, are we okay with the revised language?

Chairperson Pardo: Perfect.

Board Member Bermello: Gus, you have that?

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I have something to that effect, yes. I can show that to you later.

Board Member Bermello: Okay, thank you, Gus.

Chairperson Pardo: And also, minimum size lot would not be an issue here because...

Board Member Bermello: No.

Chairperson Pardo: No, right. I mean, you can't do it on a smaller lot anyway.

Board Member Bermello: Correct, correct.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. Alright, so -- yeah, very good.

Board Member Behar: And then there's an additional item that you would like to introduce as well, right?

Board Member Bermello: There are two more things. One was that the way that 5-202 is currently written dramatically did not make any sense. So, I was suggesting that we strike out the last phrase of A and then continue with the wording below that says include design elements of the Coral Gables Mediterranean architectural styles.

Chairperson Pardo: Willy, I know I couldn't contact you directly. But I wanted just to bring up a point so...

Board Member Bermello: That was just grammar, not...

Chairperson Pardo: No, no, no.

Board Member Bermello: I'm not changing the substance.

Chairperson Pardo: I'm not...

Board Member Behar: Where are we at?

Chairperson Pardo: I'm not defending my stuff with the bad grammar. But what I did was, I took that verbiage -- Are you there? That's here.

Board Member Behar: What page are we on?

Chairperson Pardo: That's on 5-12. So, on the grammar, so you know, I took this...

Board Member Bermello: I'm not being critical. I just thought that it would read better...

Chairperson Pardo: No, no, no, no. But I wanted...

Board Member Bermello: If you collapsed the two.

Chairperson Pardo: To tell you why it was done like that. That is verbatim out of the original 1986 resolution.

Board Member Bermello: How it read?

Chairperson Pardo: Exactly.

Board Member Bermello: I mean...

Chairperson Pardo: So...

Board Member Bermello: You want to keep it for historical context? That's fine, that's fine. I mean, I used to have a grammar teacher in Coral Gables Elementary School, and she was pretty...

Chairperson Pardo: I came up with an option anyway. I also said...

Board Member Bermello: She would not let me do run-on sentences and things like that. I realize those things are not in style today.

Chairperson Pardo: I said -- what I did was, I just changed it a little bit. I said, "Design" -- "include design elements of the Coral Gables Mediterranean Architectural Style, which are characterized and include design elements of the Coral Gables Mediterranean" -- instead of saying that say, "include design elements of the Coral Gables Mediterranean Architectural Style, which are characterized within the following existing buildings." I think that's what you were looking for.

Board Member Bermello: Right.

Chairperson Pardo: But I wanted to explain...

Board Member Bermello: Yeah, that's it.

Chairperson Pardo: I took it straight out of there.

Board Member Bermello: That's okay. And the last item for discussion -- and I'm glad that Mitch is here. And although it doesn't have anything directly with Mitch, but it has to do with a project

that we're all very proud of and we always compliment, and it's really an acclaim that he so much deserves, with the Regions Bank building. But I could see where someone -- and this is not a criticism of our Board of Architecture -- could have imposed that for that building to meet the spirit of the Mediterranean style ordinance, that it includes a number of features that I think would have totally destroyed the things that we like about the building. So -- and I'm kind of tiptoeing here because I'm trying to be courteous and to not hurt anybody's feelings because that's not the intent. But I could have foreseen a situation where maybe someone could request barrel tile roof portions somewhere in the elevator machine room or maybe certain depths to the windows or a certain series of frames or seal details that probably at that moment, Mitch would probably have, you know, done somersaults, and you know -- so, the issue is, if you have a situation like that project or it could be others that are maybe more transitional, where the architect -- there are certain things that they don't feel are appropriate in their design that you allow them to do that in exchange for losing some FAR points. You know, again, I'm not referring to anything -- mine personally that I can think of, but I -- you know, I could see where someone says, you know, this is what I wanted. I think this matches and is complementary, and I'm willing to give up some things because this is going to be an office building. I don't want to have big, large windows and an expensive -- and I don't want to see barrel tile anywhere in the project, not even in the elevator machine room. Nowhere. And in exchange for that, I'm willing to give up some of the bonus; not all of it, some of it. And what made me think of that, Mr. Chairman, was Mitch's building, which doesn't have any of those features. But I think that even though they're not all here, every member of this board, Mr. Trias, I don't think a day goes by that we don't point to it because it happens to be across from another project that we kind of like are not applauding -- right? -- and we're using that project as an example of what's right about how you interpret the Mediterranean style in a modern motif, where it still creates a good marriage in the urban landscape. But I could see how someone could have -- at that point in time many years ago -- denied Mitch's building had they applied rigorously a lot of the criteria. So, that's for -- that was a discussion item, and I think that because this is the Mediterranean style ordinance -- and I'm all about, you know, what are you doing for me lately with your project. And if you want something from us, there better be some public benefits. I've been consistent on that. But similarly, if you don't give all the public benefits because you decide

-- you think this is the right thing to do, but you give up some of those benefits that you get in return in the way of bonuses. So, I just wanted to present that because it also gives flexibility to the board a lot. And I would like to see more buildings like Mitch's around town. And I think the way that happens, you can't prescribe it. You need a good architect. There's no substitute for that. And you need to have enlightened leadership that sits on this board. And I know that that goes up and down.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Mr. Bermello, if I could ask you. Don't you think that the Table 1 and Table 2 process that was set up in the Code was meant to do that? Meaning Table 1 doesn't have as much as a Coral Gables Mediterranean architectural requirement; Table 2 does. And Table 2 gives you more FAR than Table 1. I think that's the reason why that was...

Board Member Behar: But I think...

Board Member Bermello: I will tell you in this sense -- I can -- you know, you can talk about, you know, things when they're in the past -- right? -- so now we can talk about the Commission and JFK because years have gone by, right? And I can talk about 1500 Venera because time has gone by and it's a beautiful building, et cetera. As we were going through that process, there are a number of things that I basically succumbed to and did because, first, I'm not a kind of a conflictive type of personality. And I, you know, don't profess to have the right answer all the time, and I will take a backseat to people that I think know much more than I do. But at that moment -- and I had a client that wanted to get his approvals, so there was a lot of pressure. And there were some things that, you know, were not really to my aesthetic liking on proportions or things of that nature. And that's what I'm talking about. There may be sometimes if I would have maybe had an option, there might have been some things that I would have said, you know, this is just a difference of opinion, and I'd rather give up and try to convince my client before giving up some square footage photos or number of units in exchange for something that I felt would be more appealing. But again, I think that the most impressive example is Mitch's building where, you know, it's one that we applaud, but I don't think we would be hard-pressed to take those seven examples in the

Mediterranean style ordinance and say it met any of these. What it did meet was the spirit of the City, and that's what I -- what we all like, you know. And so, that's what that's intended to do it. It's intended maybe to set the dialogue and...

Board Member Behar: Mr. Bermello, I think -- I mean, I personally, I like this because I've been a proponent of something similar to this for a long time. And what's key here is that you don't achieve the total maximum FAR that you would. You lose some, but yet the key will be that you are providing a lot of the public amenities that we're looking for. And I think you -- in your -- you described the four inch on the windows, mullions, and you put the roof, the gables. You know, that you necessarily, as you're referring to Mitch's building, it's not there, but yet, if you give that up, you don't achieve the .5, is what you're...

Board Member Bermello: Correct.

Board Member Behar: And I personally tend to agree with you there.

Board Member Bermello: Right. And by the way, some of the ones that I didn't mention, which are very difficult to describe, have to do with proportions, which is kind of in the eye of the beholder. I mean, it's easy to say, "Well, your windows don't meet the four-inch depth," or you know, "You don't have steps corbels," or you're missing barrel tile. But when someone says, "Your windows are the wrong proportion." Well, what is the right proportion? And those proportions may vary depending on the use in the building and the scale of the building, et cetera, and what's behind it. You know, I made the mention of, you know, when we did the Museum parking garage, and if I were to do it over again, I would do all the vertical cores where people are waiting for an elevator or going down the stair much different, not enclosed. I mean, who wants to go on those stairs that don't have a single window into it? And so, it's that kind of situation where the use and the context sometimes merits looking at things a little different.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: My advice is that let's accept the limits of zoning. Zoning cannot predict good architecture. It cannot make it mandatory. It's impossible. And I think that any language that we can include in the Code that you could recommend that talks about the review process, the process at the Board of Architects and so on, that they should focus on those issues. That is probably the most effective.

Board Member Behar: Yeah, but I think this -- if we elaborate more on this point -- and I'm thinking -- you know, and I don't mind (INAUDIBLE) the Plaza, but I -- you know, there are some projects that are in the US corridor that, you know, just because they did the trim around the windows and they -- you know, and they got the maximum possible, you know, bonuses doesn't mean they're...

Board Member Bermello: I mean, (INAUDIBLE) more clear. I mean, you see the projects.

Chairperson Pardo: I would...

Board Member Bermello: Paseo and Gables Station. I mean, if someone has to tell me how in the heck can you say those are Mediterranean style?

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: If those are, you know, then I could say Ronnie Mateo's, you know, Luminaire is Mediterranean style. So, I -- you know, so there's a -- and I think that's -- I mean, again, and I don't want to be critical because I realize those projects went through this board, the Board of Architects.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: They did, they did.

Board Member Bermello: Went through the City and...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Board Member Bermello: Was reviewed a thousand times. And I don't want to be critical of who was there at the time.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And the City Architect made changes through the process according to his authority also. And as you know, those things happened.

Chairperson Pardo: I would like to express my opinion. I think that this is a very slippery slope, and let's think of it backwards. On the one hand, we just discussed something about reducing density for the better good. Now, let's think about this penalty. I don't think anyone in their right mind even today -- when I say today, I mean in 2021-- would deny Mitch's building that he did so many years ago. It would be -- he would get off his bonus because the intent -- everybody could see through that. There's no doubt. The quality -- and I'm not saying it because my friend is sitting next to me. I'm saying because great architecture is a great architecture. But now let's think about the penalty. And I read this very carefully, Willy, and you know that I listen very carefully when you write or say something. Let's think about that huge building on US 1. What square footage is .1 FAR to that building? It's a behemoth. .1 to these extraordinarily large buildings is nothing. I think that the merit of the architecture, the merit of someone like Mitch making his presentation to the board, whether it's any of the examples that we've gone over and over and over in Mitch's illustrious career, it stands for itself. And I think that we get into a very slippery slope by now providing not just the power of approval to the Board of Architects, but now it becomes the square footage, you know. Now it becomes more of a moving target. It's very difficult -- unless you think that you could do this prescriptively, a paint by numbers thing, and this is how this whole thing started. There are many projects out there that have been built recently that truly to go anywhere else in the United States and never be considered Mediterranean if they were placed somewhere else. And if it wasn't for the bonuses, they wouldn't even be considered Mediterranean. The Commission was clear in what they said. I think that the quality of the architect, the quality of the

product, the expectations of the architect, the expectations of the developer should drive this. And I think that if you open the door this way, we're going in reverse, and we spent all this time for nothing. That's just my opinion. I respect your opinion and I understand that. At the very beginning, when we were looking at this, it wasn't the style of the architecture that I was concerned with. It was about the public amenities. And at one point, I was thinking of trying to have 10 public amenities where we gave, you know, a fraction of an FAR point for each one. But I like what you said, which was, look, do them all. Everything that's feasible, you do them all. I like this. It's all or nothing. And in my opinion, that's what I like. There's no doubt in my mind that Mitch Alvarez today could stand here before this Board of Architects and get it approved as a Mediterranean bonus architecture. That's just my opinion, and that's the way I think.

Board Member Bermello: By the way, I agree with you, Mr. Chair. My comments have nothing to do with those more planning and urban design issues of encroachment, setbacks, building height, et cetera. My comment has to do with, if Mitch was doing that building today and he would have gone through the Board of Architects that I went through in Venera, his project would have been denied. That's what I'm getting at. So -- which again, is not an indictment. I mean, it's just a fact as to how there was an application in different times of the same ordinance. There probably was a more enlightened group at that moment watching what was about to be presented by Mitch. They saw the quality there, et cetera, and they went with it, and they did the right thing. I happen to agree very much with Mr. Behar. I have a hard time understanding how the two projects that he mentioned got all the approval and which have nothing to do with a lot of the comments that I'm referring to. I mean because they certainly did not put the barrel tile. I don't see it anywhere, or a lot of the corbels, or some of the details. It's absent actually from there, which is a different issue. My bigger issue with them is the whole massing, the massiveness, you know, et cetera.

Board Member Behar: The proportions, everything on that.

Board Member Bermello: I'm talking about someone that is not in any way doing any of that. It's just they -- you know, I think a guy -- he's a friend of mine, Ronnie Mateo. I mean, Ronnie Mateo's

a -- I think he's a great architect, very good designer. You're not going to get Ronnie Mateo ever to subscribe to a number of the things that the Mediterranean -- and I'm -- and somebody that would give a great design, I think there needs to be a trade-off. That's all I'm suggesting.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah...

Board Member Bermello: It may be some things that architecturally -- I'm not talking about setbacks, height, building, none of that. But you got someone like that -- I remember when we did a project in the Gables here it was with Michael Graves and -- at the University of Miami before he died. And Michael Graves came in in his wheelchair. He asked me, "Willy, are we going to make it through with the fact that we don't have --?" And he was very nervous about, you know, coming here because of, you know, how the -- level of the applications. So, all I'm saying is, that there could be a situation -- and I'm not providing an incentive, nor am I saying that a .1 in FAR will make a big difference in Gables Station, Paseo, or the Plaza. I don't think it would. But all I'm saying is, as you try to strive for great design, and you have someone that believes strongly that some of these details the way that are applicable may not be totally applicable, to give them that freedom. There's still a Board of Architects that's going to review it. But you don't have to check the box in terms of each one of those features. And what I'm talking about, Mr. Chair, has nothing to do I think with what the neighbors and residents are talking about. I'm just talking about now purely on a design basis. And so, that's just to provide some flexibility to someone that doesn't want to do a strict Mediterranean style architecture. Mitch never did strict Mediterranean style in the Regions Bank. We all agree with it, right? Imagine somebody that today wanted to do it, still wanted to do a great project. He or she would have a very tough time. And that's all that I'm introducing.

Chairperson Pardo: And what I was going to say to you, Willy, is that I think you have a very good argument, but I think it's an argument for another point in time, and something that should be brought up to the Commission to see, you know, how they feel.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I will give you just a warning in the sense that FAR, as you know, is not the total square footage. There's a lot of stuff that is taken out. And if you met with me or -- I mean, you know how that goes.

Board Member Bermello: Oh, I know, I know.

Board Member Behar: But I -- look, I agree with Mr. Bermello. I think that gives the flexibility. And you're right. It may not be that in those projects, Felix, the square footage is that much, but I bet you that, you know, you take away those details that they were put there just to increase it, you know, and some people may opt to -- you know, say, look, I'll give up whatever it is, you know, of the total square footage not to have to do it. I think you're going to have, you know -- now, very good buildings, I think that, you know, is not compromising the public amenity spaces, which is what we're trying to do with this. You're not increasing the height. You're not increasing the density. On the contrary, you are decreasing the FAR. I mean, that is the way I look at it as well. And I tend to agree with Mr. Bermello that today, perhaps Mitch's building would not have gotten the total .5 benefit. And you know, and we would have maybe, you know, today lost out on a beautiful building.

Chairperson Pardo: Actually, the percentage would have been .2. But the key is to be able to qualify.

Board Member Behar: Put your mic down.

Board Member Alvarez: (INAUDIBLE) facing a serious challenge here because the Commission request was -- as if such is possible, I doubt it is -- but that you can create by formulating fantastic effort -- through fantastic effort all the details of this table you can achieve like if this was a chef recipe. You can achieve a great result for whatever dish is cooking. It doesn't happen that way. What Willy said and what you say and what you said is exactly on the dot. It's very difficult, I think, in the climate we all are facing in every environmental consideration, the mentality -- I

would say the mentality prevailing and the people that created significant pressure on the Commission to come about with this -- with resolving the problem by requesting this committee to create a formula, or a I'd say, criteria that could be measurable in very quantitative manner and very impartial manners, and in very, I would say, very rigid manners resulting is impossible to pretend that the best minds available would -- can formulate a recipe to create good architecture, good urban architecture in a challenging environment as we see to satisfy the intent, which is the vision of replicating the motifs -- the people expect some of these motifs that we think are traditionally associated with the architecture of the period, it's a formula you can apply. And the four-inch recess that is mentioned and the barrel tile -- these are things that have been used, but in no manner, they can be articulated as formula, as elements for the recipe. It does not exist. And the more they are presented or described, we may incur in encouraging that is -- the Code is written incorporating them as such, and we may be working against what we today, us, representing a broader spectrum of architects in the City. We all are hoping for improving the quality of projects. And the bonuses are an incentive for the developers to really work in that direction and giving tools to the architect/designer to do that. But we got to be very careful what we write down, so they don't become an element to tie our hands or be misused. This is the risk. I think you guys have articulated all this extremely clearly, very well. My thinking is still the concern that I don't think we'll be able to turn the table in our favor with the flexibility that you're alluding to by articulating this little formula. I don't know how to present it to the City or to the City Commission that is the body that empowered us, requested this help from us. I don't know how to express that in a manner that will allow that flexibility to happen. I just -- and I you know, this formulas of points of 5 percent and points of 1 percent in FAR is very elusive. This statistical data is very difficult to be interpreted and much less very difficult to be explained to a broader public that is expecting a product -- they think we can deliver a formula, as I said. (INAUDIBLE) things that are in this nature of activity, which is creating beauty and satisfying most important needs of habitation, it does not happen by shaking these complete components in a perfectly measurable manner and adding another factor that says per square footage of building acreage or building site. This -- you know what I'm saying. It challenges how do we word it in a manner that gives the flexibility in the Code without making them believe that we're alluding the fundamental petition,

which is writing in some manner a description of what constitutes Mediterranean architecture. Really, they had presented a question: Can you formulate a description of what makes Mediterranean architecture? So, you can print it as an example. The best thing you can do, as a matter of fact, is compile a series of buildings that we all have accessibility or have -- even if it's not from this area, but that we can feel that are elements and guidance that this building satisfies the basic components of urban design, satisfies most of the building codes we have. At the same time, they're unique. They are the result of circumstances: site, availability of information on parking area that's available, things that you can use to, you know, to give flexibility. The hardest thing in the world would be to present this in a manner that the people that receive this message would understand what we're trying to communicate and will let it ride as a piece of guidance in the Code. Rigidity is not going to be helpful. Formulas or percentage of points of square footage is almost impossible. Codes -- that's one of the reasons this should be used very strongly, precisely because the City has characterized itself by an avant-garde position of creating a body of volunteer architects practicing in the City with a level of experience and credibility that they can be an asset to the rest of the community. This board works only with the interests of the City and the citizens. You are not here for money. Nobody pays out a penny, and sometimes, we hold recognition, which is always -- adds fuel to the enthusiasm of the design force of the architects in the City. But we have to express that. We have to tell the citizens and tell the Commissioners, "Guys, you have" -- "We can help you, but you have to insist that the Board of Architects is the best interpreters of all these applications." It's not a rigid formula. And provide the necessary flexibility in the architectural process as the review process the City's established with assistance from the -- Mr. Trias in the Planning and the Zoning people, the attorneys that can guide us if we need to create a special ordinance to satisfy a situation. You know, when we did Douglas Entrance, we had to sit with three attorneys and the Planning gentleman at the time -- I forget his name; it was 40 years ago -- to create a PAD -- the first time that a PAD was used. And the regulation at the time said, "One site, one building." It's impossible with 7.3 or 7.8 acres. It would have been a million and a half square footage. It's not absorbable, manageable, buildable, or financial, or marketable at the time. So, they understood that and created flexibilities through a PAD. These types of things, as they develop, they develop, other projects will come about. You'll be facing challenges like this

one that we don't feel happy with, it'll be coming along. There'll be consolidation of land. There'll be all the difficulties coming along. But the formula is not going to be resolved with looking at sites of 15 or 20 or 25 or 35 or 50,000 square feet. You are going to see this coming, you all will, and they're going to be big challenges. Remedy is only reconfirming that the most available and effective tool is make sure you keep a balanced Board of Architects. Make sure you keep this board enthusiastic enough to continue their effort to do this work. And try to educate the citizens with as much graphic or possible records of previous constructions here or from -- even if they're not from Miami. There are words to guide and emulate both, the public, the developers, and the architects. And this is -- I think this is the best thought I can give you.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you, Mitch. Thank you very much. That was an incredible reflection. Thank you. I would like to just say one thing. At the Commission meeting that I was asked to attend, I received from our Assistant City Attorney, Gus Ceballos, an email. And he said that the Commission -- following the guidance from the Commission -- the Commission wanted to further define the term "compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods." I'd like to read this into the record, and I'll explain. Response to the City Commission for the City Commission guidance. Compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods shall include, but not limited to: Number one, preserve residential properties to assure that future development will be in conformity with the foregoing distinctive character with respect to type, intensity, design, and appearance. Number two, maintain the character of residential and non-residential districts and their unique suitability for particular uses. Number three, transitions between zoning district changes shall be accomplished through massing step-downs, such as step-backs, increased setbacks, and location of uses adjacent to said areas. So, they asked for a much more defined definition of compatibility, and I want to tell you that the first two are verbatim out of the land use element completely, in our land use element, under the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which clearly states what compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods is. The third one about the transition is that when you have uses next to each other, they use of setbacks or step-downs of massing is critical for that compatibility as a physical design tool for the Board of Architects to use, which is already in our design standards. And unless you disagree, I would like to be able to send this as a response to the City

Commission request for the compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods, which is a lot more clear.

Board Member Bermello: Could you repeat the definition?

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah. The first two come straight out of the City of Coral Gables land use element. Number one, preserve residential properties to assure that future development will be in conformity with the foregoing distinctive character with respect to type, intensity, design, and appearance. Number two, maintain the character of residential and non-residential districts and their unique suitability for particular uses. Number three, transitions between the zoning districts -- before the zoning district changes shall be accomplished through massing step-downs, such as step-backs, increased setbacks, and location of uses adjacent to said area.

Board Member Bermello: I mean, I think that's as a statement is good. But if I -- I'm sitting on the board, whether it's the Planning Board, or the Board of Adjustment, or the Board of Architects, it seems to me there are a number of items, specific items that really define compatibility. One -- and probably the most important one -- is use. I mean, we all travel, and you go through other countries. And you could find a single-family home next to a gas station. That probably creates the most incompatible of areas. So, use is critical. Density. You put a single-family home next to a multifamily building, it's not going to be a happy situation. Height. You got a single-family home that's three stories high on a street that they're all one-story ranch homes. You know, the three-story house is going to stick out like a sore thumb. Style. You go into the Chinese Village -- whether you like it or not -- and you do anything else other than the Chinese Village and you're going to stick out and you're not going to be conforming. And the last, which is really a transition area, has to do with the edges -- you call them setbacks or transitions. How many places you've gone, maybe in Latin America, and you say, "Boy, this is so different than the US." You got a nine-foot wall right on the edge of the sidewalk. You don't see -- there's a big, you know, wooden *porton* or whatever, and you say how different this is in terms of neighborhoods, you know, where I come from, where you see a lawn, you see a garden. So, I think how those -- and in different

areas, you see them immediately. You can see how from different neighborhoods that varies. So, I think all of that starts to define your level of compatibility. And if you're in a trans -- and where you really worry the most are in transition zones, you know, where you're -- you try not to do it across the street. Usually, it's an alleyway that differentiates. But in some cases -- the City of Coral Gables is a long, narrow municipality that has different cities, you know, South Miami, the City of Miami, Unincorporated Dade County, across the street from someone. And so, edges are important, but I would say all of those, with -- I think your mission statement was important. But I would add these specifics. But I would also like to try to finish the earlier item. I know we kind of migrated to this. And if I may just quickly...

Chairperson Pardo: Sure.

Board Member Bermello: Because you mentioned that slippery slope, which is a good observation. And think of it in this fashion, in reverse. Paseo and Gables Station got their entire bonus, some way, somehow, they got it. Imagine that you could have been there and said, "You know what? I don't really think you comply with the definition of Mediterranean, because you haven't done this, this, this, and this, and I'm going to give you .4 because you did all these other great things. But you're not going to get the .1 because you didn't do this." There, you're not doing it voluntarily. There, you're doing it as a board. These guys got it all. These guys got it all. They got it all.

Board Member Behar: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: So, at least this in reverse, Mr. Chair, if it does anything, it may give the Board of Architects the feeling, you know what? They're not going to get it all because they're not doing it all. Now, if Mitch was to come back with Regions Bank, I would like to give it to him all because he was meeting a different spirit. But at least, you know, for every one of Mitch, there's a thousand that we're not too happy about, and those are the ones that we're going to try to hopefully do something about. So, think of it in reverse, that right now, there are three projects that have

forced the creation of this committee. All three of them got it all, all three of them. So, if anything, you know, I mean, it may not be perfect, but at least it's saying you're not going to get it all. And it introduces a subject of more public discourse because probably that developer is going to have the best land use attorney, and they're going to say, "Well, there's precedent in Coral Gables because they did it here, here, here, and here," and then this place will be a room full of people. And someone will remember the words that we gave, and they'll say, "You know, those guys were talking about -- this was the intent when they came back with that .1," which I get it, it's not a huge amount, but it's -- but in the past, they got it all, Mr. Chair. They got it all. And you know, I know you go by, and you look at the building, and I go by, and I look at it, you know, and it's not Mediterranean. I mean, they didn't do any of the things that I had to do in 1500 Venera.

Chairperson Pardo: The sad part...

Board Member Bermello: You know, so...

Chairperson Pardo: The sad part is it was approved -- it was reviewed by staff, staff worked with them.

Board Member Bermello: Again, I'm not here to be critical. I mean, I have the highest...

Board Member Behar: There are circumstances that (INAUDIBLE) in the...

Board Member Bermello: Listen...

Board Member Behar: And the City Architect...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Behar: And you know, there are circumstances there that we cannot...

Board Member Bermello: I have the highest of respect for...

Board Member Behar: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: You know, Mr. Trias, and he knows that. We have a fan club going so -- and the City Architect too, so don't take my comments -- you know, because I realize some of the things are beyond -- they're beyond you.

Board Member Behar: No, no.

Board Member Bermello: You know, they're...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: What I would appreciate, if we could understand better the things that we don't like about those projects so we can prevent that from the future. And not right now. Think about it and give us a better -- things that -- a list of 10 things, for example, that are objectionable from an architectural design point of view about any of the projects that we don't like. I think that will be very helpful.

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Trias, if you recall a couple of months ago at the Sunshine meeting, if you recall, I said that there should be a case study of certain areas. And if you recall, I was very, very specific. What you're describing now is a case study to see what went wrong, how it went wrong, and how to change it.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: I think we've come a very long way in addressing a lot of these issues with seven architects. And I think clearly this tweaking of this code, this narrative has been a real improvement. Now, the next step is analyzing the rest of the process, which at the end of the day,

you know, we have to make sure that when these projects are being reviewed by staff, by the Board of Architects, and the City Architect, that they are very careful in understanding these concepts and the concepts and the tools that they have. And I think also -- and being quite frank -- I think that one of the best things is to make sure that the Board of Architects is always involved from the very beginning in these projects.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And let me give you an example, and I don't want to be critical of anyone. Paseo was approved by the Board of Architects, following the process (INAUDIBLE). Then they came back, and they changed the proportions of every opening, they changed the design of cornice, major, major aesthetic changes. And I don't recall being at that meeting myself. I know that they came back to the Board of Architects meeting and so on, and it was approved. I mean, they followed the process. So, what I would ask you to do is realize that there's something in the process that -- some kind of messaging or something that is not taking place.

Chairperson Pardo: I'm sorry.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No, I apologize. I mean, but what I wanted to say is that that's what happened in that specific case. And we could look at 10 other cases. A very successful project, I think it was the one that Mr. Bermello did in terms of the architect. I think -- I mean, that's my -- I think the process worked well in that case. My -- I've been doing zoning since I was 17, so I hope I know a little bit about these things. I can tell you that there's no perfect zoning code and no zoning code is going to prescribe quality. That is never going to happen. The process of review and the standards of the architect that designed the building and the Board of Architects is what I would focus on, giving them some guidance, because that to me is where the distinction between quality and mediocrity takes place. And unfortunately, sometimes we haven't been up to the task. I mean, obviously, according to the opinion of many people. I think, frankly, you can tweak zoning all you want. Oh, I want whatever, wherever. That's still not going to give you a good project.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you, Mr. Trias.

Board Member Behar: Mr. Chair, before...

Chairperson Pardo: Yes.

Board Member Behar: You do -- I have to leave, but before you do, I want to just make two comments. I agree with Mr. Bermello a hundred percent. I am in support to adopting something to this effect. So, before I leave, my vote will be to do something like this. But more importantly, I want to thank the whole committee as this is going to be my last -- our last day together -- thank the whole committee for the effort that we have put in. I think we have done something extremely great, and I'm very proud to have served in this committee with all of you. So, thank you very much. And you know, hopefully, we'll be able to see the effects of this in the near future.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you.

Board Member Behar: Okay, thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you, Mr. Behar.

Board Member Bermello: Thank you, Mr. Behar.

Board Member Alvarez: Thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: I'm going to open this up -- if you don't mind -- to the public right now. the City Clerk has made that comment. Is there anyone in the public here that would like to say something?

Gordon Sokoloff: Hi. I'm Gordon Sokoloff, 225 Alesio Avenue. I've been to five out of the six of these meetings personally, and I appreciate it so much, all of you to put in this time. I served on the Transportation Board for eight years. I'm now the Vice Chair of the Parking Advisory Board. So, our boards relate with each other because ideally, and supposedly, we are all residents who love the City and care deeply about it. I was reading on the Coral Gables Zoning Code the Board of Architects' authority. It says, "The purpose. Board of Architects is created to ensure that the City's architecture is consistent with the City's regulations and preserve the traditional aesthetic character of the community." Emphasis on the traditional aesthetic character of the community. And I understand the challenge in doing that. It's hard to do that when you have developers who go -- who come from elsewhere and they say, "Well, other cities are doing this and other cities are doing that," and they want to impart that influence here. We also have a City Manager and people in the City themselves who want to make the city of the future. You know, Coral Gables, we want to have the technology, but you need to draw a line because we are a city that is rooted in, you know, so much history and Mediterranean design. I was -- I actually came to the first meeting hoping that eliminating the Mediterranean bonus altogether was an option. I think there are, as you said, Mr. Alvarez, about there's so many ways to play "Let's Make a Deal" when the developers come up there with the FAR and the Med bonus. It just doesn't seem straight and narrow, you know. There seems to be -- I always use the comparison of the Keys. If you go down to the Keys, nothing is above four stories. And I would love to see a level playing field between commercial developers and residential homeowners. When I came up before the Board of Adjustment to make my swimming pool bigger, I had to show a hardship, and I used this line then. I said the only hardship that developers seem to show is they're not going to make enough money. But you know, homeowners have to show some legitimate hardship that's not brought on by themselves. I had -- as Chairman of the Transportation Board, one of the members had brought to our attention the Terranova project that was coming up on the corner of Miracle Mile and Ponce de Leon. That project was passed by the Board of Architects and on the Planning and Zoning Board. And I spoke in front of the Planning and Zoning Board against it and the City Commission. That project did not have a parking garage, not one single parking space. They were endorsing remote parking. It did not have a driveway, not a single driveway for a seven-story hotel. And they were -- the

developer wanted to use the back alleyway, the public right-of-way, to drop off and to pick up their guests. This passed the BOA; it passed the Planning and Zoning Board. How egregious of an insult. And by the way, I don't know of any traffic impact study by any traffic impact study company that's ever said, "You know, this development is too big. I think you ought to scale it back." They always seem to side with the developers, even Mr. Morris' initially proposed 16-story building, 170 apartments, somewhere around there, that was cited as it's not going to increase the density. You know, we were born at night, not last night. I just don't see how these guys can get away with it sometimes. I think that this board is excellent. I think that we need to work on the architectural plans even further, deeper. I don't think your work should end here. I think there's a lot of work to do. It's a very complicated code. And very often -- we're doing it today -- you know, everyone points fingers. The Commissioner is doing it. "That wasn't approved while I was a Commissioner," or "That wasn't improved when I was here." We're doing it now about the Plaza. I heard at the last Commission meeting, the City Manager said, "Well, let's not talk about the density. It is a beautiful project." And he's right, it's a beautiful project, but it's here and we have to live with it. And if you live down the street from it -- which I do -- you have to look at it every day. So, yes, we want to try to curtail these mistakes that happen. And by the way, Mr. Alvarez, unfortunately, there are people that sit up here that do have ulterior motives. It's unfortunate, but it's true. The last thing I'll say is, I live on -- off of Ponce de Leon, between Camilo and Bird Road, next to Christy's. And there is a developer -- I won't say who it is -- but he was trying to get the zoning changed from duplex single family to townhome. And he championed, you know, this. And all the homeowners got together, and we fought him on this. This gentleman, had he gotten that passed, it would have taken that townhome -- would have taken the setback all the way out to the sidewalk -- right? -- which townhomes do, and that would have been the precedent all the way down Ponce, from Camilo to Bird Road. This gentleman, when he was arguing this, was sitting right there. He was not a member of -- he was the Chairman of the Historic Preservation Board. Talk about a conflict of interest. We all are citizens, we all live here, we all love Coral Gables, but some people here, I understand, want to make money. But some people on these boards sometimes have ulterior motives. Some people do have -- you know, want to impart their influence

for their own gain. It's unfortunate. It does happen, and we need to be wary of it. Thank you for all your work. I really appreciate it.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you, Doctor.

Sue Kawalerski: Good evening, everybody. My name is Sue Kawalerski. I live at 6830 Gratian Street. I represent the Coral Gables Neighbors Association. It's a pretty large organization here in Coral Gables. And I want to thank all of you. I sat with you for five out of the six sessions, and I heard some great things coming out of your mouths. I think what you guys have done is a first step. I don't think it's the last step by any means. I think it's a first step. In my humble opinion, I think you've taken out some language out of the current code, and I think -- and thank you today, Mr. Bermello, for recommending something that wasn't even in the code to begin with. I think that's an excellent way to encourage more families to stay in Coral Gables. Give them more space on the inside, more bedrooms, and give them something in return for a developer doing that. So, thank you for introducing something new. But I really believe it's just the first step that you have achieved. I think -- if I was to go before Commission at the next meeting, I would very strongly encourage them to keep this panel going if you can afford the time to do it and move on beyond the Mediterranean bonus, or even tweak what you've already done. I think the Code really has to be looked at by experts like you. I don't think it was correctly done in the past, and I think this board has the opportunity to change things for the better, I really do. You know, I like sausage. I don't know how it's made, but I know when I see it. It's kind of like Justice Potter Stewart on the US Supreme Court once said, "I know it when I see it." And he wasn't talking about architecture, if you remember that. But I know it when I see it. I'm just a resident. And when I look at the Fink Studio, I know that's Mediterranean. I know that's something special, and I want more of that. I don't know about canopies and windows. And I learn new words here -- fenestration -- and all kinds of things like that. I don't know how that's done. That's -- you, as the professionals, know how to make it happen. You know how to make the sausage. I, as a resident, would just like to see it look Mediterranean if it's supposed to be Mediterranean, and you guys figure out how to get there. But regarding the prescriptives -- and I understand where you're coming from, Mr. Bermello

-- but you know, if I'm a doctor and I'm treating a patient, I have to prescribe the sick patient some drugs. And right now, at this point in time, we've got a sick system in the City. I think it's a sick process that has to be looked at. And we had a sick Mediterranean code that you guys are trying to fix. So, prescriptives, I think, are better. You know why? Because if I tell my sick patient, "Well, you could take some apple cider vinegar, or you could take Vitamin A, B and C, or you could do this," it's not necessarily going to get to the point of healing that patient. So, prescriptives, I think, are good because left to an individual, we are all subjective. We are not objective, and we can never be objective. I was in the news business. I never had one objective reporter working for me, not one. You know why? Human beings can't really be objective. We can try, but we'll never get there because we have biases. We have likes and dislikes, and that will always infiltrate into the end product. So, the more detail you can get, the better, with some wiggle room. But when you're talking about various levels of -- in this case, various levels a developer has to go through, think about all the individual interpretations are being laid on that project. You have City staff. How many people are looking at that on City staff with individual interpretations? Then it goes to the DRC, then it goes to the Board of Architects. Look how many individual interpretations of what you're presenting them, look how many there could be and what that could look like. It may not look like a sausage at the end. So, thank you for your work, and I hope you keep it up. Thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you very much. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: We do have several speakers on Zoom, sir. The first speaker is Ms. Myra Jolie.

Myra Jolie: Good evening to all of you. Alright, my name is Myra Jolie. I live in the neighborhood, 700 Geronimo Drive. The residents of Coral Gables who seen me speaking at these meetings all the time, they know that I don't mince my words. And I said it -- I give them directly because I have nothing to lose, nothing to gain. If you -- if the board or the City officials, they want to bend for every whim of the developers, I don't care. If they want -- if they don't want to

listen to the residents, I don't care. But when I care is when I see the justice, when I see things going the right way, when I see officials who will tell the residents that they're going to do something and then, through the back door, like one of the residents said, they are doing their own little deals with the developers. At what point the developers became so important that we have to have -- Mr. Trias, half of the time, I don't know what he's talking about because half of the time I know he's talking about something that will benefit somebody else but us. And at some point, I don't even know who works for who. The mission statement of the City of Coral Gables is this one, it says, "Hometown feel, honor our history, enhance our quality of life." And every time you call the City, City Hall, and you are put on hold -- which is many times -- you listen to that mission statement. And you start listening to it and thinking that that's what you want. But then this is what happens. This is a very good, concise, precise and up-to-the-point group of people. The blue ribbon is an honor. It's like the cordon bleu that is given to a group of us that are such excellence, and we have honor and integrity. That's what we have to have in our City officials, coming from the Mayor, Vice Mayor, and all the Commissioners. We don't want a Commission that right now has four men -- or three, I don't know -- and one girl, and we have a girl that fights like a girl, while all the others are fighting like men. But we don't care how they fight. We want them to fight for our rights to live in the City of Coral Gables, and we want to have what we bargained for. That's what we paid for. But little by little, we see how the developers, if they don't go through this group of people that are now in the blue-ribbon committee, they will go through -- over this group and go -- eventually, they will go to the City Commissioners, and that's when the residents were saying that the infiltrator is among us. We don't have to go far. We have to find out which one of the people on the Commission -- Mayor, Vice Mayor, and the Commissioners -- which one of them is the mole if it's not all of them. When we have people in our board that have -- and you can tell, you can see it. They have an intrinsic interest, monetary interest, professional interest in letting the developers come and take and take and take. We have to stand up and call them, each one of them in front of everybody. There is no way we can become just this polite group of people when we see our lives being destroyed by the same people that we are selecting to serve us. None of the things that were said today, I have no idea what anybody was saying. It is good that we have the experts. But I am afraid eventually our experts are going to be forced by the Commissioners, by

the Mayor or Vice Mayor, they're going to be forced to go against the grain, against the residents, because we only represent one vote. And if we don't -- it's only 16 of us here in this Zoom, 16 of us, when we have how many residents? How many we have? And the homeowners' associations, but we get tired. We are not Mr. Incredible here. We have to be fighting the bad guys everywhere. And the developers are the bad guys because they're bringing their money to make cubicles out of the residents, out of Coral Gables, so they have more people and more money. And for us, more money, more problems.

Chairperson Pardo: Ms. Jolie.

Ms. Jolie: So, I don't want to give you the thanks because we need more than just that. We don't want to have a board who's listening to us, and then next -- go to the next chapter.

Chairperson Pardo: Ms. Jolie.

Ms. Jolie: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: I would like to be able to hear the other people that are patiently waiting. I don't want to cut anyone off, but I...

Ms. Jolie: Oh, you can cut me off. You can cut me off. I have to go and make dinner. Peace out, people.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, ma'am.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you very much.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Chair, the next person is Ms. Myra -- Maria Cruz.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you.

Maria Cruz: Good afternoon. This has been a wonderful exercise. Let me tell you. Last week, during the Board of Architects, I heard something that really opened my eyes because something that we've been saying for a long time, and finally it came out publicly. A chairperson, while Mr. Trias was giving directions of what the Board of Architects was supposed to do, said something that really, really hit hard. She said -- she stopped, and she said "Oh, you're telling me we can do what we were told we couldn't do before?" There's something there. People have been given directions to do, to accept, to go along with what we do not want, what this city doesn't need. And I think that's what the problem is. I heard something tonight, okay. Well, you know, the developers are going to say, through their attorneys, that there's precedent. Yes, there's precedent, bad precedent. Because guess what? People approved buildings that were not up to the Code. And because they did, we should not approve any more like that. Since I was a little girl, there was a common saying, "Two wrongs don't make a right." It was wrong. What has been built in this city is wrong. The bonus that they -- that developers have been getting were wrong. So, we have to put a stop to that before it gets worse. Maybe the time has come for the residents, for the taxpayers to get a referendum going. Maybe we need to put our foot down and say, "You know what? If the electeds and if the staff cannot do the right thing, we're going to do it." We're going to say, "This is the only thing that will be approved because that's what we want." We're the ones that pay the taxes. We're the ones that bought here a long time ago. We're not coming here just to build, take the money, and run. We're here, and we plan to stay here for many years more. And the time has come -- and we need you all to stand firm. There's no reason whatsoever to bend anymore. The people have spoken. We have made it very clear. If it's not Mediterranean, if it doesn't look like the buildings that we have in the -- whatever, the manual, if it doesn't fit that criteria, guess what? No bonus, period, the end. Not a little bit, not a quarter, not an inch. Because you know what? Once you open the door -- "You know, you only gave me a quarter. Well, you know, I really need half." And we're going to be back exactly where we are now, gambling, haggling, cutting deals. And let me tell you. And you're going to see it in one of those blogs soon. There are developers today, major, major developers that their projects were not approved that

have been seen in City Hall talking to the top people. There are people at this moment recently -- if not today, because I didn't get any reports today -- but there are people that are going to the top administrators to see what deal they can cut. There's no deals. We say, "No deals." We want people to strictly follow the code, like we do in our homes. And if it doesn't work like that, then first of all, there are several Commissioners that can be recalled. There're also elections in two years, and we can do what we need to do to keep the City the way we want. And you fit very well. Please, please, we ask you not to bend, not to compromise. What you have come up with -- with very few exceptions -- have been wonderful ideas. Don't let people force you to change and say that you agree. You need to stand up and you need to say, "This is what we think should happen, and if you don't think so, you are the electeds" -- but guess what? -- "We're not going to say that we agree." We need that, and we expect it from all of you. Thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Chair, the last speaker registered for this evening is Ms. Bella Smith.

Bella Smith: Hello?

Chairperson Pardo: Hello.

Ms. Smith: Can you hear me?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, ma'am.

Ms. Smith: Do you hear me?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, ma'am.

Ms. Smith: Oh, okay. I don't think anybody that's on the Commission is a combat veteran. I've been described that way because I grew up in Shanghai, China in two wars: the undeclared war and World War II. The reason I'm bringing this up because none of the developers, nobody that has been speaking has thought of this one aspect. With Coral Gables being the home of so many foreign councils, with whom I've worked since I was a member of the Army Association, an honorary colonel there, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, when you grow up in war, you never lose that experience and it's always there. It never leaves you. Okay, I was four in the first one; bombed out of the house, shot at on the ship that we were trying to escape, and continuous through World War II. You haven't thought of one very important, major aspect. Foreign councils, major businesses in Coral Gables, terrorism. Don't think it can't happen here. It happened in New York. And you have illegal immigration. How do you think they're going to get in here? It doesn't take a genius to figure this out. And we only have two rescue trucks. You can't cover everybody. As it is, you can't cover them now. What are you going to do in the situation of terrorism? Keep it in mind. It can happen here, okay. I also want to bring up another point. When you do construction, you have concrete dust. Now, how many people do you think have lung issues? I have it, and it's the kind of thing that gets worse and worse and worse. I noticed -- I was a professional opera singer. Here it this, right there in The Herald, on the front page, a very good one. But this is -- I can't do it now, of course, at my age, but I shouldn't have this breathing problem. I wondered what was wrong with me. I went to Dr. Penaranda. I had to take a CAT scan. That concrete dust is killing you. And think of the Palace for which the residents pay a considerable price, and the land belongs to the City of Coral Gables. They're paying you to live here, okay, you, the developers and everybody else involved. Think about that because senior citizens have lung issues. In addition to that, you have children. Look at the schools around our neighborhood. They get asthma, a lot of allergies, et cetera, concrete dust. So, I'm trying to make you aware that you're facing two very challenging issues here. All these experts don't mean a thing when you have terrorism. And New York, very sophisticated city. They have everything; the arts, which Coral Gables also has. But you keep in mind terrorism because you cannot handle this. The City cannot...

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you.

Ms. Smith: Handle it. Thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you very much, Ms. Smith.

Ms. Smith: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Clerk.

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

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you very much. I wanted to thank the board members for their service. I know that Gus is going to put everything together and send it to us for one last review. As far as the last subject that we discussed, I'd like to keep that basically as a footnote to bring before the Commission at that time, if you don't mind. And I would like to also thank all of staff, Mr. Adams, Mr. Trias, our City Attorney Gus Ceballos, and you, Mr. Clerk. Thank you so much. And also, although he's part of our committee, City Architect, our chairman that had surgery just -- or Chairman of the Board of Architects -- or rather, sorry, our representative of the Board of Architects, Mr. Pratt, that had surgery today. And I wanted to thank everyone. Yes, Mr. Trias.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The next steps, just briefly.

Chairperson Pardo: Yes.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: September 14th, Commission meeting, first reading. So, hopefully, we'll have that final version prepared by Mr. Ceballos.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Trias, really quick. It's going to be at 5 p.m. They -- the Commission...

Chairperson Pardo: 5 p.m.?

City Clerk Urquia: Set a time certain for 5 p.m.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you very much.

Board Member Bermello: Is that a time certain?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Then there's a special Planning and Zoning meeting on Friday, the 17th. We were able to get four members. That's a quorum. And then the second reading will...

Board Member Bermello: Can you send us a -- like a calendar with all --?

Chairperson Pardo: The City Clerk will.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, we will. Yes, sir.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I'm just announcing it for the public record, so everybody knows what the expectations are. And then, I suppose, the second reading will be September 28. So, that is the current plan, unless you have different recommendations.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you very much. Appreciate it. And also, I just want to wish both Mr. Pratt and also Mr. Salman well, because they both had surgery. And I hope to see them soon at the -- both the Commission meeting. We're going to coordinate that to make sure that all the board members -- if they can attend -- are here for that particular meeting. I'd really appreciate it. And I just thank you very much. Is there a motion to adjourn?

Board Member Bermello: Motion to adjourn and see you on the 14th.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

City Architect Riesco: Second.

Chairperson Pardo: Second? All those in favor?

The Board Members (Collectively): Aye.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you very much.