

Page 5

1 Hearing none, Jill, if you'll call the
 2 roll, please.
 3 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?
 4 MR. BELLIN: Yes.
 5 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?
 6 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.
 7 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?
 8 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.
 9 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?
 10 MR. PEREZ: Yes.
 11 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?
 12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 13 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 14 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 15 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?
 16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.
 17 Okay. I don't know of any changes to the
 18 agenda. Seeing none, we'll stick with the
 19 agenda in the order that we have it.
 20 Items 5 and 6 -- they're all public hearing
 21 items. 5 and 6 are related. And I know our
 22 City Attorney, Mr. Leen, wanted to, I think,
 23 talk about the process or procedure.
 24 MR. LEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
 25 This matter came before the Planning and

Page 6

1 Zoning Board at the last meeting, and the
 2 Planning and Zoning Board voted to continue it.
 3 It ended up going up to the Commission on First
 4 Reading, and the Commission adopted the
 5 provisions on First Reading, and then they
 6 remanded it to back to the Planning and Zoning
 7 Board, to basically get your guidance before
 8 they take it up on Second Reading.
 9 So I just wanted to note that the
 10 Commission did want to hear the matter on First
 11 Reading. So that's why they went forward and
 12 did it. It was placed on the agenda by
 13 Commissioner Keon, and they proceeded, but they
 14 were very respectful of the fact that you
 15 wanted another chance to address this and
 16 really give your guidance, so that's why they
 17 remanded the matter.
 18 I just wanted to -- you have a Resolution
 19 in your packet, Attachment C, to the Zoning
 20 Code Text Amendment Residential Infill
 21 Regulations Staff Report, and if you look at
 22 that, the instructions from the Commission are
 23 listed in there, A through H. The important
 24 ones for you are that the City Manager should
 25 appear before the Planning and Zoning Board.

Page 7

1 It's actually been amended. This is an
 2 unsigned version of the Resolution. I'm to
 3 read to you from the signed version. "To
 4 present the guidance of the City Commission, as
 5 well as her own views on implementation of that
 6 guidance," and I can see that the City Manager
 7 is here.
 8 Welcome Madam City Manager. I know that
 9 she's going to provide you the views of the
 10 Commission from the meeting, as well as her own
 11 views on that guidance.
 12 In addition, the proposed Ordinances shall
 13 be brought to the City Commission as soon as
 14 possible, for Second Reading, after the
 15 Planning and Zoning Board meeting.
 16 Any reference to Workforce Housing shall be
 17 removed from the proposed Ordinances and the
 18 item. That was a concern of the Planning and
 19 Zoning Board. I remember that you wanted to
 20 see the report from Staff about Workforce
 21 Housing. The Commission understood that, so
 22 they asked that Workforce Housing not be part
 23 of this Ordinance. That will be addressed
 24 separately.
 25 In addition, the Ordinance shall include a

Page 8

1 minimum square footage per unit of no less than
 2 650 square feet. The Ordinance should provide
 3 that consideration be giving to including
 4 plants and/or foliage on buildings. And City
 5 Staff and the Planning and Zoning Board should
 6 consider whether the Ordinance should allow for
 7 a base density of at least a hundred units per
 8 acre.
 9 In addition, I was asked by Commissioner
 10 Vince Lago to let you know that as Attachment E
 11 is a memorandum that he wrote to the City
 12 Commission, that states his views on the topic,
 13 following the meeting.
 14 That's all I wanted to say at this time. I
 15 see that the City Manager is here, and I know
 16 that she wanted to present to you, at the
 17 instruction of the Commission, her views on
 18 this.
 19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
 20 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you, Mr. City
 21 Attorney.
 22 Madam City Manager, welcome.
 23 MS. SWANSON-RIVENBARK: Thank you --
 24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you for being
 25 here.

1 MS. SWANSON-RIVENBARK: -- Mr. Chair and
 2 Members of the Board. We genuinely respect all
 3 of the good work that you do. I have to give a
 4 special shout-out to my appointee, because I
 5 know she reads everything and works really hard
 6 on it, and I'm grateful. At all points, she
 7 knows that her job is to do whatever she
 8 believes is in the best interest of the City,
 9 and I am proud of her role on this Board, in
 10 addition to all of yours.

11 I do bring you greetings and guidance from
 12 the City Commission. At the February 14th
 13 Commission Meeting, the Commission was confused
 14 as to why Workforce Housing was a focus of the
 15 discussion at the Planning and Zoning Board
 16 meeting. It's the Commission's intention to
 17 review and consider the North Ponce
 18 Re-Development Plans, a review that has spanned
 19 decades of discussion, separate and apart from
 20 City-wide initiatives that are in the
 21 preliminary stage of drafting, such as
 22 Workforce Housing, open space and possible
 23 future incentives.

24 As you know, I should say, I reviewed your
 25 meeting on tape, and we do have it now, again,

1 on video. I'm not sure why it ever stopped,
 2 but you're back on video, and we're going to
 3 capture all of the old ones and put them in
 4 place, but I was able to watch your meeting,
 5 after the fact. I watched the Commission
 6 meeting, again, twice, so that I had a really
 7 good understanding of your discussions, your
 8 good discussions, as well as what the
 9 Commission's real intentions were.

10 And I will tell you, Mr. City Attorney,
 11 they laughed when Vice Mayor Quesada talked
 12 about foliage on the buildings, so I wouldn't
 13 necessarily frame that as a strong direction
 14 from the Commission.

15 MR. LEEN: Fair enough. Fair enough.

16 MS. SWANSON-RIVENBARK: As you know, we are
 17 in the early stages of proposing a Workforce
 18 Housing program City-wide, not unique or direct
 19 to one particular area. So it's too early to
 20 know what that will entail, where it will be,
 21 how we will apply it, and what the concepts
 22 really will be City-wide. We have not
 23 presented it to you. I have not seen it
 24 myself. We haven't had our public
 25 conversations, nor have we spoke to the

1 Commission in great detail.

2 The general concept, we like. The concept,
 3 as it applies to Coral Gables' economy, not
 4 Miami-Dade, but how that is actually applied,
 5 way too early for us to begin discussing.

6 I noticed, though, in your minutes, your
 7 Staff Reports and other discussions, that our
 8 Staff is enthused by the concept and that they
 9 may have talked a lot about it, but from the
 10 Commission's perspective, it's premature, until
 11 we can really see what the drafts entail, where
 12 it will be applied, how it will be measured,
 13 who will enforce it. It's a good concept, but
 14 we're not ready to move forward with it.

15 There are some other projects that the
 16 Commission is also really interested in, that
 17 we're just not ready to move forward with yet,
 18 but it means that in time we will.

19 At some point, we're going to come to you
 20 with a draft proposal on open space. We'll be
 21 revising what open space requirements are, what
 22 counts, what should not count, how much should
 23 be required, and how the presence of open space
 24 within projects, as well as neighborhoods,
 25 should be encouraged and protected. We're also

1 studying the Transfer of Development Rights for
 2 open space, not just Historic.

3 We had a great Workshop with the City
 4 Commission in February, and they provided
 5 important policy direction, and we are putting
 6 those concepts to paper, but they are not ready
 7 to be incorporated into the plans, nor the
 8 recommendations.

9 At some point in the future, we hope to
 10 bring you a Community Benefit Program, to
 11 ensure better transitions between Commercial
 12 and Residential areas, while also encouraging
 13 neighborhood improvements, like LED street
 14 lighting and neighborhood amenities, but that's
 15 not ready to be brought back to you, either.
 16 It also hasn't gone out for community review,
 17 so it's premature for us to require, mandate or
 18 encourage them, separate and apart from a PAD
 19 or a Site Plan process.

20 Here's what we do know. Your Board will be
 21 instrumental in shaping and framing these
 22 Ordinances in the future, but we're just not
 23 ready to bring them forward to you at this
 24 point. The recommendations, nor the plans, are
 25 ready.

1 What we are ready to do, though, is
 2 finalize the North Ponce studies, a two-year
 3 process that has involved Charrettes, community
 4 meetings and hearings. The Commission is
 5 asking for your input on several matters, such
 6 as minimum unit size. Not a minimum standard
 7 for Miami-Dade County, but what is the right
 8 unit size for Coral Gables, and what should a
 9 one bedroom be, a two-bedroom, a studio be,
 10 what types of amenities should be in place,
 11 both on site and near site of these
 12 developments; what amount of FAR is the right
 13 amount for an infill area, is it a 2 FAR, is it
 14 with an extra .5 for architectural incentives,
 15 is it higher, but what are those circumstances
 16 that it should be and what benefits must be in
 17 place for the City before it is considered; how
 18 many units per acre are desired and needed,
 19 desired for the community scale and needed to
 20 be viable. Is it 60 units per acre, is it 75
 21 with architectural incentives, is it a hundred,
 22 is it another number. Is 97 feet the right
 23 building height in that area or should it be a
 24 hundred for more floor to ceiling.
 25 I've been asked to present to you a sense

1 of the Commission and also a sense of my
 2 thoughts. As you consider the recommendations
 3 for the Infill District, free of Workforce
 4 Housing considerations, you need the time to
 5 consider what is the best recommendation for
 6 that re-development area, and you should know
 7 that you have that time. You do not need to
 8 finalize your views, your recommendations
 9 tonight, but when you are ready and your review
 10 is finalized, the Commission looks forward to
 11 hearing your recommendations. They valuable
 12 your input, and so do I.
 13 Those are general comments the Commission
 14 wanted me to present to you. I will say,
 15 you're hearing this from a First Reading
 16 action, you're hearing it in the middle, and
 17 there's no Second Reading date that has been
 18 set. There's another item that you're hearing
 19 tonight, and there was a First Reading. This
 20 is the action related to the Overlay District
 21 in the Downtown. The rush for this is because
 22 we are progressing with streetscape, and so we
 23 want to have those signs, those -- it's not a
 24 physical re-development, it's more a signage
 25 and operations guide.

1 We are interested in having those developed
 2 as soon as possible. We worked with the
 3 Business Improvement District. They're here
 4 tonight regarding the item. And so that has a
 5 sense of urgency. The other does not.
 6 So any questions I can provide regarding
 7 the Infill and the Commission's intentions or
 8 related to the Overlay District in the
 9 Downtown, I'm happy to answer them.
 10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 11 Anybody have any questions based on what we
 12 just heard or do we want to get started with
 13 the Staff presentation?
 14 MR. BEHAR: Started.
 15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: All right. Mr. Trias,
 16 it's all you.
 17 MR. TRIAS: Thank you, very much. May I
 18 have the PowerPoint, please?
 19 Just very briefly, because both, the City
 20 Attorney and the City Manager, did a great job
 21 summarizing the ideas, for the benefit of the
 22 public, I will just go through the PowerPoint.
 23 As the City Manager very clearly explained,
 24 this process has been going on for decades in
 25 the City, and at least for the past two years,

1 as far as our involvement and your involvement
 2 in these regulations.
 3 As you know, this North Ponce area has
 4 multiple issues, multiple Ordinances that you
 5 have addressed and reviewed and so on, and this
 6 is the last one. This is the last one of this
 7 comprehensive view of the North Ponce area.
 8 And it applies to every area within the
 9 boundaries that is not -- that is not a part of
 10 the Overlay in Ponce de Leon. The Ponce de
 11 Leon Overlay is shown in the blue or white line
 12 in those two pictures. The rest of it, the
 13 rest of the area, is part of this review today.
 14 There are two requests, a Comprehensive
 15 Plan Amendment, and also a Zoning Text
 16 Amendment. That has not changed. That's the
 17 same review you had before. The summary of the
 18 request was explained very, very clearly by the
 19 City Manager. There's an Overlay for the whole
 20 North Ponce area. That Overlay would allow or
 21 would propose up to a hundred units per acre,
 22 if the parcel is 20,000 square feet. So this
 23 only applies for parcels that are 20,000 square
 24 feet or larger. We're talking about up to 100
 25 units per acre, up to a 2.5 FAR, and that would

1 be with the Mediterranean Architectural Bonus
2 provisions.

3 So that really is it, in terms of the
4 content of the request, and what's being asked
5 of you is to evaluate that proposal and see
6 whether or not it makes sense at a hundred or
7 not, and at 2.5 or not, or if you have some
8 other alternative ideas.

9 The text of the proposal includes some
10 other things, such as landscape, et cetera.
11 That is consistent with the other Ordinances
12 that you have reviewed for the North Ponce, but
13 the only content that is significant is the
14 density and the FAR. Again, that's addressed,
15 both, in the Comp Plan, and in the Zoning Text
16 Amendment, and it's included for your review in
17 full detail in the Staff Report.

18 And Staff has reviewed both, the
19 Comprehensive Plan changes and the Zoning
20 changes for compliance with the Comprehensive
21 Plan, and we find that they do comply with the
22 appropriate goals and policies of the
23 Comprehensive Plan, and Staff has determined
24 that the application is consistent with the
25 Comprehensive Plan and recommend approval.

1 If you have any questions, I'll be able to
2 answer. We also have some members of the
3 BID -- I'm sorry, some members of the public
4 that may be interested in speaking on this
5 issue.

6 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you, Ramon.

7 All right. This is a public hearing item,
8 so we'll open up the public hearing. Jill, do
9 we have any speakers signed up?

10 THE SECRETARY: Yes. We have four.
11 Mario Garcia-Serra.

12 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Good evening, Mr. Chair,
13 Members of the Board, Mario Garcia-Serra, with
14 Offices at 600 Brickell Avenue, representing
15 both, the Alliance Startlight Companies, as
16 well as FIPRO Holdings, both companies have
17 multiple properties within the North Ponce
18 area.

19 We've been involved in the whole North
20 Ponce study since the very beginning, over two
21 years ago, and have been active participants,
22 generally supportive of all of the initiatives
23 that have been undertaken by the City, reviewed
24 by this Board, and ultimately approved by the
25 City Commission or are still in the process of

1 review.

2 I think, in this sort of process, it's good
3 sometimes to take a step back and sort of see,
4 okay, overall, what are we trying to achieve,
5 and I think what we're trying to achieve is
6 pretty clear. The North Ponce area has not met
7 its full potential, so we're looking for the
8 sort of re-development that everyone can agree
9 would be welcomed along certain corridors and
10 along certain parcels which have been vacant or
11 underutilized for considerably a long time and
12 simply have not been incentivized sufficiently
13 so as to be re-developed and are sort of
14 declining as time passes. That's been sort of
15 the overall goal.

16 It's been approached in three different
17 segments; the Ponce corridor, which you've
18 already reviewed, it's gone up to the City
19 Commission, I believe approved on First
20 Reading, but not yet on Second Reading; the
21 Preservation District, which has already been
22 finally approved, and then this Residential
23 Infill District. We're just trying to target
24 those properties that I mentioned before, over
25 20,000 square feet in size, that are either

1 vacant today or dramatically underutilized, as
2 far as what their density is and what's
3 permitted right now.

4 The biggest incentive, I think, that's been
5 discussed, or the two biggest incentives, have
6 been density and FAR, an increase in those, and
7 I think really where the discussion has now
8 boiled down to is, what's the appropriate
9 density, and we've been sort of hearing
10 everything from a floor of 75 units an acre to
11 potentially a hundred units to the acre.

12 The reason we, as you may have seen in the
13 minutes, were proposing or advocating for the
14 hundred units to the acre is the idea of how
15 that affects average unit size. The higher
16 density count, generally the smaller the unit
17 size will be, and smaller, not meaning going
18 too small, because, of course, there's a
19 concern with units just being too small and not
20 being sufficient or not being really suitable,
21 but the idea is also tied into what sort of --
22 what market do you want to address in the North
23 Ponce, and the idea is, I think, to try to
24 address the next generation of Coral Gables
25 families, young professionals, you know,

1 couples starting out with the family.
 2 And so the idea has been to try to get a
 3 target, I think, of somewhere around a 900 to
 4 1,000 square foot unit, and I could take out
 5 sort of the chart that we had, indicating, on a
 6 20,000 square foot site, you know, how much
 7 floor area you get, and when you have a 75 unit
 8 per acre requirement, versus a hundred unit per
 9 acre requirement, then you'll see that on the
 10 hundred unit per acre requirement, is when you
 11 start getting to the point of a 900 to a
 12 thousand square foot unit, which is, I think,
 13 the target sort of unit that we're looking for
 14 to address the particular needs of the City and
 15 the idea of re-developing this part of Coral
 16 Gables.
 17 We, of course, are advocates of moving
 18 forward, in general, with the planning process,
 19 and, you know, we do have something of an
 20 emphasis on wanting to be able to move forward
 21 as soon as possible. The market is the market,
 22 and we need to try to, you know, move forward
 23 with trying to get approvals for these new sort
 24 of developments as soon as possible. And most
 25 importantly, this has been a two-year process.

1 this come back to us with a strong hand, to get
 2 a little law and order in front of this Board.
 3 And as far as I'm aware, this Board operates at
 4 all times with law and order and respect. And
 5 so I just want to put that on the record, that
 6 we try very hard to treat everybody fairly.
 7 The process is the process. Some people
 8 may not like it, but it takes a long time
 9 before it ever gets to this Board. And we do
 10 hear this a lot, that when it comes to us, we
 11 hear complaints that they've been at it for so
 12 long, and we need to push it along. But I hope
 13 the public and the applicants understand that
 14 when it comes to this Board, it's the first
 15 time that we are seeing it. We get our packets
 16 on the Friday before the meeting, and so it's
 17 sometimes quite understandable that we need
 18 time to digest it and to review it and fully
 19 understand it, and the understanding and
 20 appreciation of the public for that part of our
 21 process will be appreciated going forward.
 22 Robert.
 23 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Chairman, I could not agree
 24 with you more. Well said.
 25 If we start with -- and I want to give you

1 Two other components of it have already been
 2 reviewed and approved by the City Commission.
 3 We think it's only fair for the process to
 4 finish with this final segment being able to be
 5 reviewed by the City Commission, which
 6 initiated the process to begging with.
 7 Those are all of my comments. We're
 8 available, of course, to provide more
 9 information, if you'd like, similar to what we
 10 presented to the City Commission.
 11 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 12 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Thank you.
 13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.
 14 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: That's it, Jill?
 15 THE SECRETARY: The other speakers are for
 16 the other item.
 17 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. So we'll close
 18 the public hearing on this item, and open it up
 19 for discussion amongst the Board.
 20 MR. BEHAR: Anybody wants to start?
 21 MS. MENENDEZ: No.
 22 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Well, before you get
 23 into the details, just so our record is clear,
 24 in reading the minutes that we got from the
 25 Commission Meeting, somebody suggested that

1 my thought on this item, before we do much
 2 more. I think I am pretty -- I have a lot of
 3 experience doing multi-family buildings very
 4 similar to what we're going to be considering
 5 today. And I've done my math back and forth,
 6 to the point where it's a very simple process,
 7 and something that we need to keep in mind in
 8 the Gables is that our FAR also takes into
 9 account common areas, such as corridors. If
 10 you do a multi-purpose room, if you do a
 11 fitness center or gym, all of that is taken
 12 into consideration when you calculate the FAR.
 13 If we try to do -- which the goal, the
 14 intent, is, I think, and I agree, is to do
 15 units in the range of 650 to, let's say, a
 16 thousand square feet, that's an average of
 17 about 850 to 900 square feet per unit.
 18 When you add a common area factor, which in
 19 my case, and we may have disagreement with
 20 other design professionals, what we normally
 21 put into the projects, to be in a competitive
 22 market, is between 20 to 22 percent common area
 23 factor.
 24 So if I take a unit that averages between
 25 650 and a thousand, let's say it's about 850 to

1 900, and I add 20, 22 percent, my average unit
 2 sizes come up to 1,100 square feet.
 3 If I do that, and I want to say, okay, how
 4 could I get my density, and I take a 20,000
 5 square foot lot, and I multiply that not times
 6 2.5, but, let's say, 2.75, gives me an FAR,
 7 maximum FAR, for that property of 55,000. When
 8 I divide 55,000 divided by 1,100 per unit, I
 9 get 50 units on half an acre. So when I
 10 multiply times the acre, that equates to about
 11 a hundred units per acre. Those are the unit
 12 sizes that, again, give us a net rentable of
 13 650 for the small one, maybe for a one bedroom,
 14 and a thousand for the two bedrooms.
 15 So we've got to look at it, when we
 16 calculate -- when we, you know, figure out the
 17 FAR and the density, based on the actual we're
 18 going to be doing, not just taking the FAR that
 19 you're allowed to do and divide it by an
 20 average of 650, because that will give you a
 21 much higher density.
 22 I think you have to take into consideration
 23 the common area that goes into these projects
 24 in order to be able to do the proper
 25 calculation, in my opinion. That's the only

1 way that you could, you know, do it correctly.
 2 To me, and we could go back and forth,
 3 since, you know, last time, I'm a believer that
 4 a hundred units per acre is a right number to
 5 be assigned for the properties, which, in a
 6 smaller lot, in a half an acre lot, 20,000,
 7 you're only going to get a 50-unit building,
 8 but that's going to give you the sizes. The
 9 FAR, I think that the 2.5 is okay. I think the
 10 2.75 will work much better.
 11 Just to go back and touch on something that
 12 our City Manager mentioned, the height, those
 13 three -- going from 97 to a hundred is a huge
 14 difference, because you don't -- in order to go
 15 from like an eight-foot ceiling, you know, to
 16 like an eight-foot-eight, that is what you
 17 need, because if not, in the bathrooms, in the
 18 closet, you have very low ceilings. Those
 19 eight inches mean a lot.
 20 And in order to get a ten-story building,
 21 which you will do, in 97 feet, you're really
 22 compromising the finished floor height on a
 23 unit. Those additional three feet makes an
 24 incredible difference.
 25 So I will support, you know, for us to

1 consider the a hundred feet versus 97.
 2 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman, I neglected to
 3 say that the 100 feet is also included in the
 4 Ordinance, in the proposal.
 5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 6 MR. BEHAR: Don't worry. I did that for
 7 you.
 8 But, you know, that's my opinion, you know,
 9 and I base this -- so you know, I mean, I have
 10 done, over the last fifteen years, luckily, a
 11 lot of the units, a lot, I mean, probably in
 12 excess -- not in Coral Gables, throughout,
 13 probably in excess of 15, 18,000 units. And
 14 when you do the equation, we do it for purposes
 15 of fees and all, what I could get, how many
 16 units could I get on a project, and the math
 17 works out almost perfect when you do those
 18 numbers. That's my opinion.
 19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I just want to make sure
 20 I'm understanding this correctly. Is the
 21 matter that's been voted on by the City
 22 Commission, are they -- and I'm not sure I'm
 23 looking at the right thing, that's why I want
 24 to make sure that my colleague set me straight
 25 here, if I'm going awry, the way I read this,

1 and I'm not looking at one that's signed, but
 2 it seems that they -- what they are looking at
 3 and they voted, at least on First Reading, is a
 4 maximum of 60 units per acre or 75 units per
 5 acre with architectural incentives. Am I
 6 looking at the right thing?
 7 MR. LEEN: No.
 8 MR. BEHAR: No.
 9 MR. LEEN: Are you looking at the
 10 Resolution, Attachment C?
 11 MS. MENENDEZ: No.
 12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I'm looking at Attachment
 13 A.
 14 MS. MENENDEZ: You're looking --
 15 MR. LEEN: You're looking at what they
 16 approved.
 17 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Attachment A.
 18 MR. LEEN: On First Reading? The First
 19 Reading Ordinance.
 20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Is that Attachment A?
 21 MR. LEEN: Yes.
 22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So that is what
 23 they --
 24 MR. LEEN: But they had some comments, as
 25 well. Because, remember, they approved it on

1 First Reading, and they have Staff go back and
2 look at it, and there were a number of
3 inquiries to Staff, which the City Manager
4 mentioned, and also is mentioned in the
5 Resolution that's Attachment C.

6 So they're not -- they have not made a
7 final determination at all as to any of those
8 matters.

9 Mr. Trias, do you have anything further?

10 MR. TRIAS: No. You're correct. And the
11 facts are that on Page 3 --

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I'm following.
13 Thank you.

14 MR. TRIAS: Page 3 summarizes the issue.

15 MR. LEEN: Yes. So what they wanted was
16 your guidance, so that you could provide that,
17 and then on Second Reading they could make
18 amendments to some of those things. And, in
19 particular, they emphasized in the
20 Resolution -- I'm having a signed copy brought
21 for each of you of the Resolution so that you
22 can have it. Cristina Suarez is going to get
23 it for me.

24 But, in particular, they identified -- they
25 looked at square footage per unit. They didn't

1 want it to be any less than 650 square feet.
2 They wanted Workforce Housing removed. But
3 they asked you specifically whether the
4 Ordinance should allow for a base density of at
5 least a hundred units per acre. So they asked
6 you a specific question. They wanted to know
7 what you thought was the appropriate units per
8 acre.

9 MR. TRIAS: And Mr. Chairman, if I could
10 help, also. Staff included a chart that
11 analyzes the numbers in ways that are very
12 consistent with what Mr. Behar said.

13 We basically took a 25 percent common area
14 number, which is close or probably very
15 optimistic, in terms of the size, and I have to
16 say that our data is exactly what -- consistent
17 with the opinions of Mr. Behar, in terms of
18 sizes, and in terms of the overall dimensions
19 of units. And we can go over it, if you want
20 to, but we have a couple of examples, that are
21 built examples. We have a couple of
22 theoretical examples, at 20,000 square feet,
23 and the numbers, I believe, work very well.

24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Maria.

25 MS. MENENDEZ: No. I just have a few quick

1 questions for my peace of mind.

2 Originally, when we first looked at this
3 Infill area, we were looking at just one
4 section.

5 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

6 MS. MENENDEZ: And then, either one meeting
7 ago or two meetings ago, the entire North Ponce
8 area came into effect. I'm having a hard time
9 understanding why that happened.

10 MR. TRIAS: That happened as a result of
11 the very good input we got from the Board and
12 from different people involved in the process.
13 And it is my recommendation that this should
14 apply to the whole area. And I say that,
15 because we're talking about 20,000 square feet
16 parcels or larger, and that's a limited number
17 of parcels.

18 If you look at the realistic application of
19 this Infill, there's only a handful of places
20 where this would apply, and it became very
21 clear to me, from the point of view of the
22 professional Staff, that this was a good
23 transition between the Conservation District
24 ideas and the Mixed-Use ideas at the core, at
25 the center of the North Ponce. It was a good

1 way to transition between the two.

2 So that's our recommendation. Clearly, you
3 can provide whatever opinion or recommendation
4 you believe.

5 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay.

6 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Marshall.

7 MR. BELLIN: Yeah. I think the
8 recommendations that the Commission came up
9 with make a lot of sense. The a hundred units
10 an acre is something that I think will work
11 well with the unit size.

12 I don't agree with the 650 minimum size. I
13 think that's too big. If you want to provide
14 studios or efficiencies, 650 is too large. The
15 Code now allows for a minimum of 575, and I
16 think we ought to keep that.

17 MS. MENENDEZ: For a studio or for a one
18 bedroom?

19 MR. BELLIN: The minimum size of 575. And,
20 generally speaking, it would be for a studio.

21 MS. MENENDEZ: Yeah, it has to be for a
22 studio, because one bedroom is tough.

23 MR. BELLIN: No, a one bedroom --

24 MS. MENENDEZ: I have a one bedroom, 700
25 square feet, and that's tough.

1 MR. BELLIN: Yeah. A one bedroom should be
2 around 750 to 800, and two bedrooms maybe a
3 thousand, but that's up to the developer, how
4 to work that out. But I would like to see the
5 575 kept as is.

6 MR. TRIAS: Okay. Again, that was -- the
7 Commission's recommendation was 650. The
8 numbers we looked at is that 600 or so is a
9 reasonable number for efficiencies.

10 MR. BEHAR: To me -- and I would agree,
11 some of the units that we did at the Gables
12 Ponce, and I'll walk you through, some of the
13 units are very small. They're about that size,
14 maybe just a little bit tight.

15 MS. MENENDEZ: What size?

16 MR. BEHAR: 580. 580 Square feet --

17 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay.

18 MR. BEHAR: -- you know, and they work.
19 And we only did 20 units like that. Those 20
20 units went very quickly, out of 300 something
21 units. So there is a need for that.

22 At the end of the day, it really doesn't
23 matter if we -- you know, if you have 575, you
24 have a density cap, so it's not like you could
25 say, "Okay, if I do units that are going to be

1 an average of 800 or 850, and I want to reduce
2 them to the 575, I'm going to get more units."
3 The density is going to cap you, no matter
4 what.

5 So, you know, that's not -- I will agree
6 that it will be good to keep some units just a
7 tad smaller. If a developer wants to provide,
8 you know, a more reasonable priced unit, maybe
9 he will do 10 percent of the units or, you
10 know, 20 percent of the units. That way he
11 could afford to put it at a lower number.

12 So I don't have a problem putting, you
13 know, like a studio or something at 575, like
14 Marshall, you know, suggested, that is today in
15 the Code, and then going from there. I think
16 that's going to -- that's going to allow for
17 more affordable priced units, not affordable
18 units, but more affordable priced units.

19 MR. BELLIN: So I think what we need to do
20 now is, since we've gotten guidance with
21 respect to density, and you know my opinion on
22 unit size, what is the proper FAR.

23 MR. TRIAS: The recommendation is 2.5, with
24 Med Bonus, at this point, and that gives you
25 800 or so square feet for the average, if you

1 take 25 percent off for common areas, at a
2 hundred units.

3 MR. BEHAR: You're going to be -- you're
4 going to be probably less -- if you do that,
5 less than a hundred units per acre. You're
6 going to probably drop to closer to like 90
7 units per acre, if you do the 2.5, you know.
8 And we could do that. We can select to -- you
9 know, opt to do the 2.5. My recommendation is,
10 you know, the 2.75. Not the normal, like you
11 allow in other areas, that you're allowed to go
12 with Med Bonus up to 3.5. 2.75 gives you
13 enough to provide wider corridors, you know,
14 common area spaces, multi-purpose rooms,
15 fitness center, that, in today's market, is
16 needed in order to be competitive.

17 The days of having small corridors and no
18 amenities are no longer there. If you want to
19 compete and you want to be able to get a
20 market, you know, you have to do that. And
21 that's based on my experience on a daily basis.

22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: That's based on your belief
23 that a hundred units per acre is the right
24 number.

25 MR. BEHAR: Yes. Yes, Frank.

1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: And I'm just throwing this
2 out to you and also to Ramon, I was reading the
3 memo circulated by Commissioner Lago, and he
4 expresses a concern, on the part of the
5 residents, of congestion and density. And he,
6 in his memo at least, recommends no more than
7 75 to 85 units with all incentives considered.
8 And I'm wondering -- I want to hear from Robert
9 on this, too, but, first, Ramon, is that
10 something that was considered by the Staff?
11 You know, I understand you had meetings with
12 residents, and did they share with you the
13 concerns that they apparently shared with
14 Commissioner Lago about the density and not
15 wanting any more than 75 to 85 units per acre?

16 MR. TRIAS: Yes. And I think that the
17 concern is the impact, in terms of traffic.
18 That's the way that I hear that discussion.
19 People sometimes are concerned that more units
20 mean a lot of more automobile traffic, and that
21 is true.

22 But what I would like to propose here is
23 that, because of the existing conditions and
24 because of the fact that this is going to be
25 really applicable in only a few locations,

1 because the minimum size is 20,000 square
2 feet --

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry, Ramon, I have a
4 question about that. Excuse me for
5 interrupting.

6 MR. TRIAS: Yeah, go ahead.

7 MR. RODRIGUEZ: It could be naivety on my
8 part, but can't you acquire like lots and put
9 them together and get 20 --

10 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: So what you may have today
12 may not be the same circumstance you have
13 tomorrow, if somebody gets industrious and
14 ambitious and starts acquiring lots.

15 MR. TRIAS: That is true, and what happens
16 is that -- I would say that because you have
17 changed already the Conservation District, and
18 that encourages the preservation of buildings
19 that are there and the addition of buildings --
20 additions to those buildings, they have become
21 much more valuable, in terms of buildings that
22 can be restored and can become very, very
23 attractive.

24 And I say this, because the densities that
25 are existing right now with two-story buildings

1 are very high, because they don't have parking,
2 and because they tend to be very small units.
3 So the number of units that you have in
4 existing buildings, sometimes you cannot even
5 match with the proposed regulation. So they
6 have value.

7 So what happens is that I believe -- I
8 believe that there's going to be some
9 assemblage, certainly, but I don't believe that
10 the neighborhood is going to disappear all of a
11 sudden and we're going to have only 20,000
12 square foot parcels. That is not a likely
13 scenario, because of the different incentives
14 that we have created.

15 So I think that the impact -- just to make
16 it simple, I think that the impact is going to
17 be limited. I don't think the impact can be
18 measured precisely, because of exactly what
19 you're saying, but I don't think it's going to
20 be a wholesale impact, in terms of the whole
21 area. I think it's going to be limited and
22 it's going to be very beneficial to the area,
23 because it brings residents, and that, in
24 itself, creates a much higher quality of life.

25 MR. BEHAR: You know, Frank, I think the --

1 again, I'm a strong believer that a hundred
2 units is the right number, for the reason that
3 I explained earlier. And I will agree with
4 Ramon. This is not going to be a free-for-all
5 throughout the whole area.

6 It goes further, when you start looking at
7 the requirements, if you're abutting a property
8 that is not of 20,000 square feet, then you may
9 not even reach this density, because the
10 setback requirements are greater and all. So
11 this will only happen in certain pockets,
12 certain areas, that you could do -- you know,
13 that is conducive to that, not just anywhere.

14 MS. MENENDEZ: Have we identified those
15 areas? Ramon, have we done a study?

16 MR. TRIAS: Well, let me give you an
17 example from today. Today I met with a person
18 that controls these two parcels right here on
19 Eighth Street. Both of them are less than
20 20,000 square feet. And I had a discussion
21 with him about, "Well, maybe you can assemble
22 some land," and they had tried, but that had
23 not worked. So, for example, it's very
24 unlikely that these changes take place.

25 Now, when you look at this aerial, and the

1 white line is the Mixed-Use District along
2 Ponce de Leon, you don't see too many green
3 open parcels, and those are the ones that I
4 would say -- to answer your question, have I
5 identified some, yes. I mean, there's one
6 right here. There's another one maybe right
7 here. But this one, for example, I believe
8 it's an ownership on both sides of this line,
9 so even that requires some thinking, in terms
10 of what is the best approach to development,
11 and the rest of it, if you look at this -- for
12 example, this vacant parcel right here, that's
13 in the Mixed-Use District, so that's not one of
14 the likely parcels. So that is the best
15 explanation that I can give you, in terms of
16 likelihood.

17 Likelihood means that there are two or
18 three parcels that are already assembled.
19 Anything else would have to be assembled. And
20 from my conversations with individuals, it is
21 difficult to assemble.

22 So the impact is -- unless you have a
23 different experience.

24 MR. BEHAR: No. No. You're absolutely
25 correct. I could attest that it's very, very

1 difficult to assemble parcels, you know,
2 greater than 20,000. It's very difficult,
3 unfortunately. I mean, I don't want to say
4 impossible, because nothing is impossible, but
5 it's very difficult to do that.

6 MR. PEREZ: For the sole purpose, it just
7 becomes cost prohibited for the purpose of
8 making sense of your land basis. So I would
9 agree that the chances of an assembling in that
10 area being greater than 20,000 square feet
11 would be very difficult.

12 MR. WU: But I have to ask you to speak
13 into the mike.

14 MR. PEREZ: Sure.

15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: And then I also think,
16 and, of course, one of the architects or Ramon
17 can tell me I'm wrong, but, of course, the
18 number of units will dictate the traffic
19 impact, but I also think the number of bedrooms
20 surely contributes to that. And if you reduce
21 the density, but you don't reduce the FAR,
22 you're going to end up, I think, with just
23 larger units and more bedrooms, which, really,
24 doesn't offset any traffic impact, as opposed
25 to higher density, but smaller units.

1 MR. BEHAR: You know, I'm curious, we sit
2 in the middle of a big urban area, Coral Gables
3 does, and I will say, like, I don't know, 80
4 percent of the traffic that comes through the
5 Gables is from the outside, that passes through
6 Coral Gables.

7 It has been proven that if you have more
8 residential units within the City, the traffic
9 decreases, the local traffic decreases. We
10 cannot avoid having people pass through our
11 streets. Unfortunately, you know, it's every
12 day, you know, in the morning and afternoon,
13 but if you generate -- you start providing more
14 residential units within the corridor, this
15 area, we're going to be better off, you know,
16 because it has been proven the trolley -- and I
17 wish I had those statistics -- how much the
18 users have increased.

19 You know, I'm telling you, my daughter --
20 the perfect example, she lives above my office.
21 I don't get to see her very often, but she
22 lives right above us at the Gables Ponce.
23 Probably, four days a week, she takes the
24 trolley. She works on 2525 Ponce. She takes
25 the trolley to work.

1 You know, it's a different mentality, the
2 young folks, that want to participate, and
3 that's what we need to, I think, gear to.

4 MR. TRIAS: I don't think we should
5 underestimate traffic. Traffic is a serious
6 issue, a very important issue. We certainly
7 think about it. But, in this case, we're
8 dealing with an urban infill situation, where
9 people are much more important than cars, and
10 certainly the opportunity to have that
11 transition between the very large buildings
12 that are allowed on Ponce de Leon and the
13 historic fabric of the Conservation District,
14 that transition is what we're talking about,
15 and I think -- I think it's a limited impact, a
16 limited transition, but very valuable, from an
17 aesthetic point of view, and also from the
18 point of view of having more people in the
19 neighborhood.

20 MR. GRABIEL: I agree. We've been looking
21 at this area now for months, I think, or years,
22 and we've always identified it as the place
23 where we can make housing that can fit our
24 extended families, our children, you know, in
25 some cases, even our grandchildren, you know,

1 who are looking for smaller units, that would
2 like to live in Coral Gables, and it's a
3 perfect location to do the smaller unit, the
4 higher density.

5 You have the buses on Eighth Street, the
6 buses on Douglas. You have the trolley going
7 down Ponce de Leon. If we want people to live
8 in Coral Gables and work in Coral Gables, this
9 is the place where we can provide the kind of
10 housing that would allow that to happen.

11 MS. MENENDEZ: Julio, how small is small
12 for you?

13 MR. GRABIEL: I would like to go below 600.

14 MS. MENENDEZ: Really?

15 MR. GRABIEL: You know, I agree. I agree
16 that we should be below 600. I don't know if
17 575 is the one. 25 square feet --

18 MS. MENENDEZ: For studios?

19 MR. GRABIEL: Yes, for a studio, because
20 there are couples and singles who can live in a
21 studio, and would like to live in Coral Gables,
22 you know, because they work in Coral Gables,
23 from Douglas Entrance all of the way to
24 Downtown Coral Gables, and they can't afford
25 the one bedroom -- a two bedroom or the one

1 bedroom apartment, but a studio fits in an
2 economic model that is very attractive to some
3 people.

4 So, you know, I don't know where 650 came
5 from, if there was an analytical study done for
6 the 650 or it was just --

7 MR. TRIAS: My opinion is that there was an
8 interest in having some higher quality units in
9 the City of Coral Gables, and that was one way
10 to achieve that. Now, that may not be the best
11 way. If you have a different suggestion,
12 certainly we can forward that to the
13 Commission.

14 MR. LEEN: May I add something?

15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Sure.

16 MR. LEEN: You know, the Resolution
17 indicated that the Ordinance should include a
18 minimum square footage per unit of no less than
19 650 square feet.

20 So when this goes back to the Commission,
21 it will have this in there, no less of 650
22 square feet; however, you should vote on -- if
23 you don't agree with that, you have the right
24 to recommend anything you think --

25 MS. MENENDEZ: Is that for a studio, Craig?

1 MR. LEEN: That was the minimum square
2 footage per unit.

3 MS. MENENDEZ: Regardless?

4 MR. LEEN: Yeah. Now, my own thought was,
5 there was a concern that this was turning into
6 a Workforce Housing Ordinance, and so they
7 wanted to make it clear that it wasn't, and
8 that if there's going to be smaller units for
9 Workforce Housing, that would be handled
10 separately, in a different Ordinance.

11 I think that that's part of the reason why
12 this came in, but, I mean, ultimately, you have
13 the transcript or you could look at the
14 transcript and decide. What their Resolution
15 says is no less than 650 square feet. You are
16 free to recommend something different, but it
17 will go in the Ordinance as 650 square feet, at
18 least as the minimum.

19 MR. TRIAS: 650 is a very large efficiency.
20 I mean, that will be a large efficiency.

21 MR. BEHAR: That's a very comfortable one
22 bedroom.

23 MR. TRIAS: Yeah. Yes.

24 MS. MENENDEZ: It's a nice one bedroom,
25 yeah.

1 MR. TRIAS: Absolutely.

2 MR. BELLIN: I thought I was recommending
3 something other than 650. What I was
4 recommending was 575.

5 MR. LEEN: What did you say? You're
6 saying, from the Commission or from this Board?

7 MR. PEREZ: From the Board.

8 MR. BELLIN: No, it's my recommendation
9 from this Board --

10 MR. LEEN: Oh, no, no. I definitely heard
11 that recommendation, and what I would say is
12 that -- I think it would be useful if you did a
13 straw pole or you do a vote to let the
14 Commission know what you think the minimum
15 should be. All I was saying was that Staff,
16 when they present it on Second Reading,
17 according to the Resolution and the
18 instructions of the Commission, it can't be
19 less than 650 square feet.

20 The Commission can then consider your
21 recommendation and they could lower it on
22 Second Reading.

23 MR. TRIAS: So, Mr. Chairman, I've heard
24 two issues so far. One is the 575 square feet.
25 The other one is 2.75 FAR. So if at some point

1 you would like to take a straw vote or even put
2 in --

3 MR. BEHAR: You know, the 575 -- maybe
4 what, and I will, when the time of
5 recommendation, I will recommend that maybe a
6 certain percentage of the units, you know, is
7 575, the rest have to be 650 or above.

8 And, for example, I would say, maybe 25
9 percent of the units cannot be less -- you
10 know, could be only 575. The rest have to be
11 650 or higher. So you provide a little bit of
12 both within the project.

13 MR. PEREZ: So I'm in agreement, as well,
14 of keeping the flexibility of a smaller unit.
15 At the end of the day, in my opinion, I think
16 it's going to boil down to the builder and the
17 developer and what type of unit he wants to
18 deliver and what type of niche he seems or
19 feels there's a demand for.

20 I wouldn't want to see a requirement to
21 keep a certain percentage of smaller units. At
22 the end of the day, I feel that you should
23 give, you know, autonomy or the right to that
24 builder, that developer, to deliver that
25 minimum size as he sees fit. At the end of the

1 day, if he wants to deliver bigger units, I
 2 think he has the right to do that, as well.
 3 So I would want to keep the smaller units
 4 at where they are right now, but I wouldn't
 5 want to put any requirement as to how much
 6 they're forced to deliver.
 7 MR. BEHAR: The only reason, Albert, I
 8 suggested that is, coming from the Resolution
 9 from the Commission, that, you know, they voted
 10 on 650. I would want to, you know, have the
 11 ability to at least lower it, and as a
 12 compromise, you know, because, let's say, we
 13 don't want to allow smaller units, then we're
 14 going to keep, you know, 650. At least maybe
 15 there's a possibility, as an option for them,
 16 to say, okay, we'll allow some units to be
 17 smaller, you know.
 18 From the beginning, I thought 575 could
 19 work.
 20 MR. PEREZ: So just to make sure I
 21 understand, what you're saying is, if, in fact,
 22 we allow or we propose to reduce that to 575 or
 23 580, what you're saying is, if, in fact, a
 24 developer wants to go that small, to put a cap
 25 on those number of units?

1 point the developer or the builder is going to
 2 rent them at. And, at the end, that's what we
 3 need, to keep those numbers to be within an
 4 ability for, you know, the young people or
 5 whoever -- because not only young people, you
 6 know, anybody could afford to do it.
 7 MR. WU: Mr. Chair, as a thought, maybe if
 8 the 650 pertains to one bedroom, and the 575 to
 9 efficiencies, would that make more sense to you
 10 all?
 11 MR. BELLIN: Well, I don't think you're
 12 going to do a one bedroom at 575.
 13 MR. WU: That's why I'm saying, if we just
 14 quantify it -- qualify it, that 650 pertains to
 15 a one bedroom minimum.
 16 MR. BELLIN: I think it's just going to
 17 evolve all on its own.
 18 MR. WU: So you would like the 575 --
 19 MR. BELLIN: Because 575 is the minimum,
 20 and generally speaking, that's going to be an
 21 efficiency or a studio. It's not going to be a
 22 one bedroom.
 23 MR. WU: Okay.
 24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Ramon.
 25 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman, you could choose

1 MR. BEHAR: And the reason -- yes, because
 2 the Commission is -- the Resolution says, 650,
 3 and they may not want to give a hundred
 4 percent, you know, freedom to do all small
 5 units, so, you know, maybe a percentage of
 6 them.
 7 And, look, and you're right, the market
 8 would dictate. From my experience, typically
 9 you -- typically you do 45 percent one
 10 bedrooms, 45 percent two bedrooms, and 10
 11 percent three bedrooms. Those are typically
 12 the numbers, how they work out. The two
 13 bedrooms always is a split plan, okay. So you
 14 have, bedroom and bathroom, bedroom and
 15 bathroom, because that way you could have two
 16 roommates.
 17 The one bedroom -- again, 650 is the one
 18 bedroom. A smaller unit, yeah, you could do
 19 the 575. You could even do less. But let's
 20 say, 575, since it's currently in the Code.
 21 The two-bedroom will range between 850 to
 22 1,050. It depends whether it's a corner unit
 23 or it's, you know, an interior unit, but those
 24 are the numbers that the market would dictate.
 25 And all of this is driven by the price

1 to be silent on that issue, and then regulate
 2 with the density and the FAR and the existing
 3 minimum size, and just simply be silent. I
 4 think I agree with the comment that the market
 5 should be able to dictate some of this. I
 6 think that's a good strategy. And I think that
 7 the only issue that I think we need to discuss
 8 a little bit further is that if you truly
 9 believe that 2.5 is not sufficient to build the
 10 100 units, then the additional FAR could be
 11 warranted.
 12 In our analysis, it appeared to work at a
 13 hundred, but --
 14 MR. BEHAR: You know, I'm saying it,
 15 because I've done my calculations, and that's
 16 what it really would take, the 2.75, to do it.
 17 You get -- actually, what it does, it will give
 18 you the flexibility to have the minimum size
 19 units, you know, comfortably.
 20 MR. TRIAS: I mean, certainly the units
 21 will be larger, and I'm a hundred percent
 22 sure --
 23 MR. BEHAR: And more important, something,
 24 again -- the City uses the FAR, which, you
 25 know, takes into consideration the corridors.

1 You know, I have not done a five-foot wide
 2 corridor in the last ten years. Typically we
 3 do a six-foot wide corridor, because that's
 4 what -- it looks better. Why? Because when we
 5 do the interior design, you know, the doors are
 6 set back in. You're allowed to do
 7 articulations in the hallway, not just a flat
 8 hallway, so you start, you know, doing
 9 something of nicer quality. So that's a
 10 six-foot hallway, what it requires, minimum.

11 So that is taken into consideration in the
 12 FAR. You know, if we were doing a really low,
 13 low end residential units building, then you
 14 could do the five-foot hallways and you do what
 15 I do for the Pinnacles and the Conifer, which
 16 those are really affordable housing projects,
 17 not what we want to do here.

18 MS. MENENDEZ: I mean, but there's no
 19 regulation saying you have to have a six-foot
 20 corridor.

21 MR. BEHAR: The market will dictate that,
 22 Maria. The market will dictate the quality of
 23 the product you do. Walk with me Gables
 24 Residential, the Gables Ponce Project. You
 25 know, look at the amenities. Why are they

1 getting one of the largest, if not the largest,
 2 rent in the whole Miami-Dade County? Because
 3 of the quality of the product that they're
 4 delivering.

5 You know, the multi-purpose, you got a
 6 multi-purpose who is probably, I don't know,
 7 3,000 square feet. You've got another room,
 8 that's called the Club Room, that's probably
 9 another 1,800. The fitness center, you should
 10 drive by that ground floor fitness center. It
 11 is really -- you know, it's a lot of units, 300
 12 units in total, but it's like a 4,000 square
 13 foot, you know, fitness center, because that's
 14 what today is required, those amenities, in
 15 order to be competitive.

16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Frank.

17 MR. RODRIGUEZ: If you wanted to stay with
 18 a -- I'm talking to Robert now, since, you
 19 know, you've been speaking on these issues. If
 20 you wanted to stay with the 2.5 FAR, I think --
 21 did I hear you say that 90 units would be the
 22 appropriate?

23 MR. BEHAR: No. To do it at the ratio --
 24 at the square footage that I'm talking about,
 25 you're going to get a hundred units, but that

1 means the unit will be -- the average of the
 2 units will be smaller. Instead of being an
 3 average of, let's say, 900, your average will
 4 be 825, okay. The 650 and two-bedroom will
 5 drop, you know, enough, to get you those
 6 numbers. You're still going to achieve the
 7 hundred units, but the average, you know, will
 8 be smaller. The common areas may not be as
 9 much. And, I mean, I don't know if any of
 10 the --

11 MR. TRIAS: Our analysis was 820. So it's
 12 exactly what you're saying, in terms of the
 13 average.

14 MS. MENENDEZ: Your analysis said, what?

15 MR. TRIAS: The analysis of the unit that
 16 Robert said was 825, ours was 820, so we agree
 17 completely. And that's included in your
 18 package. That's this chart.

19 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Anybody have any
 20 other comments? Questions?

21 MR. BELLIN: I have some comments. It's
 22 mostly some -- maybe some housecleaning
 23 comments. Mediterranean architecture, in order
 24 to take advantage of what's being offered, the
 25 hundred units an acre and the 2.75, if that's

1 the number, Mediterranean architecture is
 2 mandatory.

3 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

4 MR. BELLIN: It just seems like it all
 5 ought to be tied together. You know, it's
 6 mandatory, so you've got to provide it, so
 7 you're getting incentives to provide it.

8 MR. TRIAS: Well, you get the additional
 9 density. You can do less density, if you
 10 choose not to do the Mediterranean.

11 MR. BELLIN: Well, then you go back to 50
 12 units an acre.

13 MR. TRIAS: No, 75. 75 units per acre.

14 MR. BELLIN: Okay. 75 units an acre.

15 MR. BEHAR: But without Med Bonuses, for
 16 lack of a word, 75; with Med is a hundred, the
 17 density.

18 MR. TRIAS: Right. Exactly.

19 MR. BELLIN: Yeah, but there's a whole
 20 other things that come with that. You get the
 21 density. You get the FAR. You get a whole
 22 range of things. And you've got to provide a
 23 bunch of things, according to the table.

24 MR. TRIAS: But you get the additional
 25 density and the additional FAR. So it's a

1 bonus program.
 2 MR. BEHAR: What are the specific
 3 requirements that is part of the Resolution?
 4 MR. BELLIN: So much from Table 1 and so
 5 much from Table 2.
 6 MR. BEHAR: But I think that's something
 7 then we have to really -- I think, today, in my
 8 opinion, we vote on the density, the FAR, or we
 9 recommend, and then those housecleaning, which
 10 is a good way to put it, we've got to go back
 11 and see what it will entail to do that.
 12 MR. TRIAS: Yeah. Tonight we are not
 13 changing -- Staff is not proposing to change
 14 the Mediterranean Bonus Ordinance. That's
 15 something that, it exists, it's applied. What
 16 we're saying is, you can do 75 units or a
 17 hundred. A hundred would require compliance
 18 with the typical regulations of the Med Bonus
 19 Program.
 20 MR. PEREZ: What's the FAR with
 21 non-Mediterranean Bonuses?
 22 MR. TRIAS: Let me read it again. 2.0.
 23 MR. PEREZ: 2.0?
 24 MR. TRIAS: 2.0, and 2.5 would be the
 25 bonus.

1 Now, that's an issue that you are
 2 discussing at this point, but that is what's in
 3 the text of the Ordinance.
 4 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Chair, how are we going to
 5 do this today? Are we going to make -- I mean,
 6 at the end of the conversation and discussions,
 7 are we going to make a motion to approve
 8 something or --
 9 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Well, we are in between
 10 that stage between First and Second Reading.
 11 So they're looking for recommendations, as I
 12 understand it. The City Commission is looking
 13 for some input on some of the areas we've been
 14 talking about.
 15 MR. TRIAS: Right.
 16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: And so I think what we
 17 ought to do, we have a Staff recommendation,
 18 which seems to follow the will of the
 19 Commission, and so we can maybe add comments to
 20 that, either recommend approval, like as it's
 21 presented, or like we would any other time, or
 22 approval with some modifications. And there's
 23 two before us. One is related to the Master
 24 Plan and then --
 25 MR. TRIAS: The Comp Plan and the Zoning

1 Text.
 2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: And then the Zoning
 3 Text, correct.
 4 MR. TRIAS: No, both do the same thing. So
 5 the concepts don't change.
 6 MR. BEHAR: I will make a motion to approve
 7 the Staff recommendation with the -- you know,
 8 a modification is to increase the FAR from 2.5
 9 to 2.75.
 10 MR. WU: Mr. Chair, I suggest we have
 11 different motions. Item Number 5 is the
 12 Comprehensive Plan. That is strictly dealing
 13 with the density, to a hundred dwelling units
 14 per acre. The FAR and the unit size pertain to
 15 Item Number 6, which is the Zoning --
 16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yeah, we will, but
 17 let's --
 18 MR. LEEN: You can do separate
 19 recommendations as to each, by motion, but it
 20 will be good to hear them --
 21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: We will. We're going
 22 to go down them separately, but let's get the
 23 thought.
 24 MR. LEEN: Exactly.
 25 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: We always like to get

1 all of the thought processes out on the table,
 2 and then we step back and motion one and then
 3 the other.
 4 So, Robert, you were saying --
 5 MR. BEHAR: I will recommend the a hundred
 6 units per acre. I will recommend increasing to
 7 2.75. And I will recommend that the smallest
 8 units would be 575 square feet.
 9 I am perfectly fine with no limit on how
 10 many you can do, because, at the end of the
 11 day, you know, it really doesn't matter to us.
 12 Those would be my recommendation, a hundred
 13 units, 2.75 FAR, and minimum unit sizes, 575.
 14 MR. BELLIN: I'll second it.
 15 MR. LEEN: And just to be clear, those
 16 would be the amounts with architectural
 17 incentives?
 18 MR. BEHAR: That's correct, yes.
 19 MR. LEEN: Okay.
 20 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. And that
 21 would -- once we get to it, that would be
 22 towards Item 6. So, don't worry, we'll take a
 23 step back, like we always do, but we have a
 24 motion and a second on the table.
 25 And, Frank, you started to say something.

1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. Are we still able to
2 have questions?

3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Of course.

4 MR. RODRIGUEZ: All right. Look, I have a
5 question for you, Ramon. With regard to the
6 unit sizes, if you have less units, with more
7 rooms, wouldn't you have less need for parking,
8 and, you know, less traffic, because if you
9 have more rooms, you don't necessarily assume
10 that more rooms means you're going to have, you
11 know, adults or driving age roommates, you
12 could have children, for example?

13 So isn't the circumstance where you have
14 larger units, with more rooms, when you're
15 comparing that to a circumstance where you have
16 smaller units, with less rooms, and more of
17 them, wouldn't you necessarily have less
18 traffic?

19 MR. TRIAS: Yes. And I think that the key
20 is that, more of them. You will have less
21 units, because they're larger, so -- in a
22 general sense, yes, traffic will be less.

23 MR. BELLIN: Then the problem becomes, what
24 we're trying to do is arrive at a rent that's
25 affordable. That's the bottom line. A

1 three-bedroom unit is going to rent for \$6,000.
2 For me, it makes no sense.

3 MR. TRIAS: Yeah, and certainly a developer
4 can build less units than a hundred units per
5 acre that are larger. That's a choice.

6 MR. BEHAR: Exactly.

7 MR. TRIAS: Yeah.

8 MR. BEHAR: And if they want to do -- you
9 know, what it is-is, if they want to do a
10 hundred units, small units, it's going to be a
11 smaller building, but -- so you're not going to
12 get as tall a building or as big of a building,
13 because the units may be smaller.

14 MS. MENENDEZ: But realistically that
15 doesn't really happen --

16 MR. BEHAR: No, that's why I don't have --

17 MS. MENENDEZ: -- if they have the
18 potential to build all that's being proposed.

19 MR. BEHAR: But you're capping the density,
20 so it doesn't matter.

21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: But does anybody ever
22 leave density and floor area on the table?

23 MR. BEHAR: Yes. Yes. Yes.

24 MR. PEREZ: What was the question?

25 MR. BEHAR: Unfortunately, yes.

1 MR. PEREZ: What was the question?

2 MS. MENENDEZ: What recent project --

3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Does anybody ever leave
4 density and square footage on the table?

5 MR. PEREZ: Absolutely.

6 MS. MENENDEZ: These seem --

7 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

8 MR. LEEN: Wait. Wait. Wait. One at a
9 time, please.

10 MR. PEREZ: I think, in my opinion, what's
11 being proposed gives the developer and the
12 builder flexibility, because to Robert's point,
13 I think it's a great idea to go to a maximum of
14 2.75, because that gives you flexibility to go
15 over and above amenities. Once again, if I
16 want to build something that I feel was a void
17 in the market, and I want to deliver nice
18 amenities, I had the flexibility, because now I
19 could go up to the 2.75.

20 But to your question, absolutely. Density
21 and FAR is left on the table all of the time,
22 because there are developers and there are
23 builders that feel that bigger isn't always
24 necessarily better. Now, at the end of the
25 day, it's a matter of being comfortable with

1 the product that you're delivering and
2 designing, ultimately, once again, that you
3 feel that you're delivering something to the
4 market that's going to be well received.

5 So I'm of the opinion that what's being
6 proposed, with the 2.75, with the density of a
7 hundred units per acre, and the minimum size, I
8 believe we're giving flexibility to future
9 builders to work within that realm of filling a
10 void of what is required in that portion of the
11 City.

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I have another follow-up
13 question --

14 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: -- regarding an item that
16 we touched upon earlier, about the possibility.
17 And I take very -- I know, your opinion and
18 Alberto's, I weigh, you know, very seriously,
19 regarding the compilation of lots, you know,
20 getting the lots together, and I understand
21 from what both of you have said that that is
22 difficult -- economically difficult to do, and
23 hasn't happened a great deal up to now.

24 And my question is, with the changes that
25 are being proposed, assuming that the

1 Resolution or the motion -- I'm sorry, the
 2 motion that Robert has proposed passes, and
 3 let's say that the Commission then, upon our
 4 recommendation, acts upon it and passes it in
 5 the City Commission, would that circumstance,
 6 the fact that now you're talking with totally
 7 new rules that apply to parcels of 20,000
 8 square feet or greater, would that -- might
 9 that possibly change the economic equation, so
 10 something that has not happened too much in the
 11 past, all of a sudden becomes not only
 12 economically viable, but maybe economically,
 13 you know, something that people are looking to
 14 do, and, you know, that concerns me somewhat?
 15 MR. TRIAS: Certainly the conditions will
 16 change, yes, and there will be some of that,
 17 but I think that the time frame that we're
 18 talking about, in terms of major change, will
 19 be very long. And I say that, because Coral
 20 Gables is a very strong market, and there are
 21 very few vacant properties. There are
 22 buildings everywhere.
 23 Now, in my prior experience, where I've had
 24 the chance to work in cities that were not
 25 Coral Gables and they didn't have the economic

1 vitality that Coral Gables has, an image like
 2 that aerial photograph will be mostly vacant,
 3 and then I would say, yes, certainly things are
 4 going to change dramatically, because look at
 5 all of this vacant land, because of -- that's
 6 not the case here. That's not the case.
 7 The other thing is, as I said before, you
 8 have reinforced and encouraged the preservation
 9 of some of the fabric of the smaller buildings.
 10 Those are very dense. Those buildings have
 11 comparable densities to what we're talking
 12 about here. It's just that they don't look it,
 13 because they're small, but they have value.
 14 They certainly have value.
 15 So if you ask me a question, do I believe
 16 that in the next, let's say, five years, all of
 17 a sudden every parcel is going to be assembled
 18 into -- no, I don't believe so. In the next
 19 fifty years, I don't know. But, certainly, in
 20 the immediate future, I think what we have is
 21 pretty much close to what we're going to get,
 22 except for the parcels that have been assembled
 23 already, and probably we will get a better
 24 chance of re-development along Ponce de Leon.
 25 I think it's more likely that assemblages will

1 take place there.
 2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Anybody else?
 3 MR. LEEN: So, Mr. Chair, with the motion
 4 as to the Comp Plan change, which is Attachment
 5 A, it looks like the motion is consistent with
 6 the Staff recommendation, with the current
 7 writing, because right now it would be 75 units
 8 per acre, up to a hundred with architectural
 9 incentives. It doesn't address FAR.
 10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Correct.
 11 MR. TRIAS: The FAR, the recommendation was
 12 2.5. They are recommending maybe 2.75.
 13 MS. MENENDEZ: The Staff recommends 2.5.
 14 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
 15 MS. MENENDEZ: And do you have a minimum
 16 square footage in your recommendation? I
 17 didn't see it.
 18 MR. TRIAS: It is in the text of the
 19 Ordinance, and it's 650.
 20 MS. MENENDEZ: Right. The Ordinance I saw,
 21 but it's not in your recommendation.
 22 MR. TRIAS: That is the recommendations.
 23 We're recommending that Ordinance.
 24 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay.
 25 MR. LEEN: Ms. Menendez, what I meant was,

1 the proposed Comp Plan change, the Text that's
 2 on Page 2 of Attachment A, right now it's 75
 3 units per acre or a hundred with architectural
 4 incentives. It sounds like you're not
 5 addressing the height, which is up to a hundred
 6 feet maximum, with architectural incentives.
 7 Those are the only two things that are
 8 addressed by the Comp Plan.
 9 MR. TRIAS: The Staff recommendation is a
 10 hundred feet, which is about three or four feet
 11 more than what we allow typically. That allows
 12 a much better fit for parking. So it does make
 13 a difference. So we believe that's important.
 14 MR. LEEN: So, Mr. Chair, the point --
 15 Mr. Behar, are you okay -- is your motion
 16 consistent with that? Do you want to keep it
 17 the way it is? The Comp Plan change.
 18 MR. BEHAR: Yes. Yes, it is, because this
 19 is going from 75 to a hundred, and from 97 feet
 20 to a hundred feet, correct?
 21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.
 22 MR. LEEN: Yes.
 23 MR. BEHAR: And it doesn't mention FAR
 24 here.
 25 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: No.

Page 69

1 MS. MENENDEZ: No, it doesn't.
2 MR. TRIAS: The Comp Plan deals with
3 density.
4 MR. BEHAR: Yes. I'm --
5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. So, Robert, do
6 you want to move Item 5, as recommended?
7 MR. BEHAR: I'll make a motion to move Item
8 5, as per Attachment A.
9 MR. PEREZ: I'll second it.
10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Motion and a second.
11 Any further comment on that item? That's the
12 one that says it's 75 units to the acre or a
13 hundred with Med Bonus and up to a hundred feet
14 max.
15 Okay. Hearing none, Jill, call the roll,
16 please.
17 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?
18 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.
19 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?
20 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.
21 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?
22 MR. PEREZ: Yes.
23 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?
24 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No.
25 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

Page 70

1 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
2 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?
3 MR. BELLIN: Yes.
4 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?
5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.
6 All right. Robert, was your earlier motion
7 that had some changes to the Staff rec for Item
8 Number 6?
9 MR. WU: The changes pertain to Page 3 of
10 the Ordinance. If I can reference Item 4.C.
11 What I --
12 MR. BEHAR: Yeah. I'll make a motion to
13 approve Item 6, under Attachment B, with the
14 modification that the FAR, under 4.C goes from
15 a 2.0 to 2.5, be changed to 2.0 to 2.75 FAR.
16 MR. PEREZ: With Mediterranean Bonuses?
17 MR. BEHAR: With Mediterranean Bonus,
18 correct.
19 MR. PEREZ: I'll second it.
20 MS. MENENDEZ: I'm sorry, you're saying, on
21 Attachment B, which are the proposed changes?
22 MR. BEHAR: 4.C -- under 4.C, which is the
23 FAR, currently it says in this --
24 MS. MENENDEZ: You want to change it to
25 2.75?

Page 71

1 MR. BEHAR: Exactly. From 2.0 to 2.75.
2 MR. WU: And E pertains to the size.
3 MR. TRIAS: And there you have two options.
4 You could propose a different number or simply
5 eliminate it and be silent.
6 MR. BEHAR: I will say, on E, as well --
7 thank you, Charles -- on E to reduce that
8 number to 575, as it's currently in the Zoning
9 Code.
10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay.
11 MR. PEREZ: I'll second it.
12 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: A motion and a second.
13 Do we have any discussion on that one?
14 Hearing none, call the roll, please, Jill.
15 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?
16 MS. MENENDEZ: No.
17 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?
18 MR. PEREZ: Yes.
19 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?
20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No.
21 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
22 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
23 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?
24 MR. BELLIN: Yes.
25 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?

Page 72

1 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.
2 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?
3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: No.
4 All right. So that's 5 and 6.
5 MS. MENENDEZ: What else?
6 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: We have one more item
7 on the agenda.
8 MR. TRIAS: Thank you very much.
9 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: You're welcome.
10 Next item is Item Number 7. This is an
11 Ordinance of the City of Commission of Coral
12 Gables, Florida providing for a text amendment
13 to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning
14 Code by amending Article 4, "Zoning Districts,"
15 Section 4-206, "Business Improvement Overlay
16 District" to include special provisions for all
17 properties within the District such as
18 pedestrian-oriented signage, hours of
19 operation, and outdoor dining; providing for a
20 repealer provision, providing for a
21 severability clause, codification and providing
22 for an effective date.
23 (Thereupon, Mr. Perez left the Commission
24 Chambers.)
25 MR. TRIAS: May I have the PowerPoint,