

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting  
Agenda Item G-10  
May 9, 2023  
City Commission Chambers  
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago  
Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson  
Commissioner Melissa Castro  
Commissioner Ariel Fernandez  
Commissioner Kirk Menendez**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez  
City Manager, Peter Iglesias  
City Clerk, Billy Urquia  
Parking Director, Kevin Kinney  
Finance Director, Diana Gomez**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Sue Kawalerski  
Debra Register  
Gordon Sokoloff  
Jackson “Rip” Holmes  
Thomas O’Malley  
Maria Cruz  
Ed Santamaria  
Karelia Carbonell**

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Agenda Item G-10 [4:30 p.m.]  
Discussion on the future of the Mobility Hub.  
(Sponsored by Commissioner Fernandez)

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City Commission Meeting  
May 9, 2023  
Agenda Item G-10 - Discussion on the future of the Mobility Hub.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, on Item G-10, which is the discussion on the future of the Mobility Hub -- this is probably after overdevelopment, permitting issues, the Mobility Hub was the third most discussed topic with residents over the course of this campaign.

City Clerk Urquia: I'm sorry to interrupt, Commissioner. Just really quick. The previous speakers were on agenda Item G-5, not G-10. We have not taken public comment on G-10 yet.

Mayor Lago: That's fine.

Commissioner Fernandez: Do we have people that are speaking on G-10?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir.

Mayor Lago: Yes, we do.

Commissioner Fernandez: Okay, all right.

Mayor Lago: Let me -- let me -- let me run the meeting.

Commissioner Fernandez: All right.

Mayor Lago: All right, so let's have -- let's have -- do you want to have --? It's your item. Do you want to have conversation first amongst the Commission and then public comment, or how do you -- how would you like to do it?

Commissioner Fernandez: I think we can continue the conversation and then we'll do public comment.

Mayor Lago: All right, let's go.

Commissioner Menendez: Yeah.

Commissioner Fernandez: Because some of the questions may be answered by our discussion so...

Commissioner Menendez: Good point.

Mayor Lago: That's what I hope.

Commissioner Fernandez: I think the biggest elephant in the room is the price, the price tag on the Mobility Hub, and we've had many discussions -- you've had many discussions as the Commission about the lack of funding that we have for a \$63 million project. And I know you've done work -- the -- all of you -- all three of you have done work in trying to get funding in Tallahassee for it. I know there's a current, I guess...

Mayor Lago: Earmark. There's an earmark in Washington.

Commissioner Fernandez: Earmark in Washington for \$4 million for the Mobility Hub, but we'd fall very short of where we need to be. The two concerns that residents most have about the Mobility Hub are the design and the size. And I think those are the two largest concerns that we've heard from residents over the last few months. Obviously, the price as well. Nobody wants to spend \$63 million on a garage. And I understand there's different components that are going into it, but I wanted to open it up to discussion about what we're able to do to bring it back to where the residents would be happy with the project. We obviously need a garage there. We need to improve on the current project. I myself do not drive into that parking garage because I am not comfortable maneuvering through the garage. So, I know there's issues. I've heard numerous complaints about the elevators. So, we obviously need to do something there. I think if we're able

to do something on a smaller scale that's able to fill the needs that we have with a different design, it'll be easier to find the funding as well. And that's basically what I wanted to say and open it up to discussion for the rest of us.

Mayor Lago: Okay, so I'm happy that we agree that we need to build a parking garage. 27 percent of our tax base comes from the downtown. So, as we talked about before, we enjoy the second lowest millage rate for a full service city in Miami-Dade County for one simple reason, one simple reason only, our downtown. Our downtown subsidizes our residential areas, it subsidizes our tax base, 27 to 30 percent. And it's only going to get more as property values in the downtown increase. That is what's giving us the money to do all the historic projects, sidewalks, everything that we want to do. So, we need to invest in our downtown and ensure that we have a parking garage that makes sense. That building, that site is already zoned. I didn't rezone it. I've been here the longest. I did not rezone it. It was zoned for 190 feet, so that is what the Code allows in that building. Right now, we're talking about a proposed building of 121 feet, 627 total parking spaces, an activated rooftop which is going to cost about \$8 million, which is -- if you want to get rid of the activated rooftop, you don't want to park, you don't want solar, we can save \$8 million there. A ground floor, which will have retail, a litany of mobility services and amenities that will be, you know, all basically curated for the future. Charging stations -- I think half of us here, if not almost four -- I think three out of the five drive electric cars here on this Commission, it's completely changed. I think there's a bunch of different micro-mobility service opportunities, ridesharing, point-to-point service, flex transit, opportunities to basically house Uber deliveries, which is a major problem that I've actually put here as an agenda topic today, which they're taking up spaces all over Miracle Mile and our downtown, and we need to do something about it. The point is that the funding is not coming from the general fund. It's going to be funded through parking surtax charges, correct, Mr. Manager?

City Manager Iglesias: That is correct, Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, so it's not coming from taxpayers. It's coming from people who use that garage and basically are going to be paying for the debt service of that garage. I -- being in construction, I see that building and I would love nothing more than to retrofit an existing building. You can save money if it makes sense. The problem with retrofitting that building is if you're going to retrofit that building, you've got to remove parking spaces to make the drives more accessible so that larger vehicles -- by the way, everybody drives a large vehicle now, except for me. It's just we like large vehicles in this country. I don't have -- I was going to try to do some research and get the numbers, but if you look at the numbers in regards to vehicles, Tahoes, Yukons, Suburbans, you know, Mercedes, they're all just getting larger and larger and larger. And they just don't fit in this. So what can we do? If you don't like the design, it's fine. I don't have an issue with it, and I'm talking about everybody. Nobody likes the design, it's fine, it's okay. But there's a cost to changing the design. But I want to build consensus that we need a parking garage. That is the number one thing that we need. We need a parking garage, and we have to be honest and come to terms with 121 feet is 70 feet smaller than what's allowed by the Code. We're going the opposite way so...

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, it's 116 to the floor.

Mayor Lago: 116, excuse me. 74 feet less than what's allowed by the Code. So, I think that's what we have to come to terms and say we need something there. It's not coming out of taxpayers' dollars. It's coming out of the parking. And this is something, which again, I think will bring incredible revenue to the City, not only in parking revenue, but I think will give us -- will solidify and give us -- strengthen our backbone in regards to -- as I told you, the retail numbers at 98 percent and the office space at 90 percent. I mean, it's only going to get more and more busy. People want to come to the City of Coral Gables. People want to conduct business here. We grow from 51,000 residents during the day to over 150,000 people -- excuse me, 51,000 residents during the day to 150,000 people as a result of people coming to do business and enjoy our city. So, we need to have a serious conversation about if it's the design or if we're going to move forward with this project. That's where I stand on the issue.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I would -- I would just like to say there was a number of design parameters that were quite difficult for the design team because we wanted to get a garage that was going to be used. We wanted an airy, well-ventilated garage.

Mayor Lago: Yep.

City Manager Iglesias: Right, so it would be cool, it would be well used. We wanted a garage with a lot of natural lighting and a well-lighted garage. We wanted a very comfortable garage with a very comfortable traffic geometry. We wanted the floors to be flat for comfort and also for ADA so they could be used by the disabled because you have a flat floor instead of a sloped floor which is very difficult to use. We wanted to have security so that people will feel comfortable using that garage and understand that it is secure. We wanted to have multiple mobility strategies because that garage was going to be there for 75 years or more. We wanted to look at adaptive reuse, because again, that garage is going to be there for over 75 years. And then we went through multiple approvals for design because it was difficult to get all these parameters in. It's also -- we also looked at the Mediterranean option. The problem what you have with a parking garage is it has to be a box. It has to be a box because people have to be able to drive to the top and drive back to the bottom. So, looking at all these parameters and what we wanted to do to have a garage that was going to be very comfortable for the residents -- and this is the design that was done for all these design parameters. So, the zoning there is MX3, it's 190.5. The top floor of the garage is 116 feet. There's been talk about a park in the Publix -- in the Central Business District, which they pay park impact fees. The garage was brought up to the upper level to kind of keep that garage -- that park concept there. Also, we don't allow garages anymore to park at the ground floor. We want an activated streetscape. And so then all the retail spaces and so forth were brought to the first floor. So, all those design parameters were looked at. And it was difficult because we went through a number of schemes, but we wanted to use something -- we were aware that we lost 86 spaces in the Mile, and we wanted to do a garage in which people felt very comfortable using. Not a garage that's dark, that there's no ventilation, that people feel insecure. We wanted a garage

to be something that people could freely use and was almost equivalent to parking on the street. So, we felt that this design met these kind of parameters. So, it wasn't forced. It was a design that worked itself into that parameter. We do have a park at the upper floor that's \$6.2 million. We do have -- we could reduce the height of the garage two feet per floor. That would only save about \$800,000. Construction costs right now are through the roof. We estimated Firehouse 4 to be about \$4.5 million. It's now over \$8 million, almost \$8.5 million, and that's Firehouse 4. These escalation costs have affected all construction. To assume that we're going to do another garage and not be affected by escalation costs is not there. As I mentioned, Firehouse 4 went from \$4.5 million to over \$8 million. And those are escalation costs. That is not -- those are not CPI increase. Those are escalation costs which are well above any of those -- any of those increases. So, we have to consider that whatever we do now at this point will be substantially more -- more expensive. If you look at the costs that have increased in Firehouse 4, they're very similar to the costs that have increased in -- in -- in the Mobility Hub, very, very similar. I know that the Mayor is in construction, and he deals with this -- with this every day. It's very difficult. This is escalation, it's not inflation. And these costs are sky high right now.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, Mr. Manager. Go ahead, Commissioner.

Commissioner Menendez: So, I was -- obviously, we were at the town hall last night and then today we already had comments about the future of that parking garage. I'm more the "glass is half full" kind of person, and I heard Dr. Sokoloff and Mr. Holmes talk about the garage across from the museum behind John Martin's as an example of something that conceptually, in terms of height, and you know, is something that could work. Does -- before I move on, what's the height difference between that garage and what was proposed regarding mobility, more or less.

Parking Director Kinney: The actual official height of the museum garage is at less than 100 feet, but I believe the top of the parapet wall is like 104, 102, somewhere around that.

Mayor Lago: It's a 12-foot difference.

Commissioner Menendez: 12 foot, okay.

Mayor Lago: Correct?

Commissioner Menendez: 12 foot, all right.

Commissioner Fernandez: Which is basically the equivalent of the two feet per floor, correct, more or less?

Commissioner Menendez: Two feet for...

Commissioner Fernandez: You we were talking about reducing each floor.

City Manager Iglesias: It's nine floors, so it's approximately...

Commissioner Fernandez: So, just about.

Commissioner Menendez: We'd get there.

City Manager Iglesias: It's like 16 feet.

Commissioner Menendez: So, we would get there. What I'm hearing last night and today is we strive to find a balance because there is a need. And the good thing is I think we will get to that balance. I do believe that whatever we build should have the needed elements, electric charging stations, a way to have Uber and other vehicles off the streets and sort of centralized there. The design is something we'll have to figure out, but good air circulation, you know, nobody likes to go into parking garages where you actually feel like you're in a cave, regardless of what -- you know, the exterior may look nice, but the experience inside is not good. ADA. So, I think, at least

what I'm sensing is we're open to find that balance, that we still have the important elements inside of it, but it's something that the community can perhaps better embrace. So, I'm open to finding that balance.

Vice Mayor Anderson: If I -- I'll add a few two cents to that. We had a Sunshine meeting when we were going through the design stages of the Mobility Hub. And during that first effort to offer other designs, I had some with greenery on them, I had multiple other types of options out there. Some of the feedback I got from the residents was positive. Being that that was not something that the remainder of the Commission was in favor of, I then really focused on something that allowed the breeze to come in, wasn't going to reflect the heat down on the street and worked with a variety of designs. Some I copied off of other garages, some I just made up myself, and I also used the Barnacle as an example. I talked to Gensler about lowering some of the floors, about the cost on the cost of cement. We passed a resolution to provide additional time, so we weren't being forced to pay excruciating escalation costs. Let's see, Attorney would -- I don't remember what the date of that resolution was to provide us the additional time. But a couple things were clear. When you talked about an activated roof, a lot of people were in favor of an activated roof because that's additional park space. That's like buying another lot. It would be a waste not to utilize it. It would be like throwing land away, essentially, if we don't utilize that space for whatever activity is going to be that we can determine in the future. So, I focused mainly on trying to change the panels because I looked carefully at the circulation of the garage. I looked at options to cantilever it over the alley. That didn't work well for the circulation of the garage and the ramping, so I became more comfortable with the fact that it was cantilevering over the sidewalk because that protected, you know, pedestrians from rain and other issues. Plus, we wanted to hook this in with a nice bike lane and provide adequate parking for bicycles of all types, high-end bicycles versus, you know, something on the lower end and something on the medium. My 30-year-old carbon fiber is remarkably still worth about 5 to 600 bucks. That could easily get picked off by somebody by just with bolt cutters. So, I would lock it up a little more tightly than I would the junkers that I used to use in my youth. So, I think, you know, we can have that discussion on the design. I can tell you that the motion that I made that failed was to send it back to the Board of Architects with

direction from this Commission as to the type of design. Do we want Art Deco to mimic the block itself? Because you have, you know, the Coral -- you know, the cinema right there, the art cinema right there. The whole block kind of takes on -- not the best Art Deco in the world, but it is still Art Deco. We could even do something better. Or if you want Mediterranean. The problem with the Mediterranean is it starts to not achieve what some people want in a way of the openness, the airiness. So, that's where I'm on it. I don't think every floor needs to be 12 feet. I do think they need to be enough, so we get that air circulation, maybe 10 feet, so that you don't feel squashed in. I do know the future is going to be different, but I don't think we're ever going to get to the point where every single floor is going to be adaptive reuse. Okay, that's it. That's my comments on that.

Commissioner Castro: Has working with what we have been completely discarded?

Mayor Lago: I don't -- I mean, I personally -- I leave it up to staff to recommend or give their guidance on it, but I think that there's no possible way that we could reuse what we have there existing. I think that...

Vice Mayor Anderson: It's...

Mayor Lago: To make -- bring it up to Code and to also be able to make it as pleasant and comfortable experience, we have to remove so many parking spaces that I just don't -- I don't think it would be even feasible. And the cost of construction right now for reuse is really, really expensive.

Vice Mayor Anderson: And...

Mayor Lago: It's even more expensive than new construction. And by the way, I want -- since you brought that up, I wanted to bring up a fact, and I'll let the Manager talk about it. We had a conversation about if we move towards a more Mediterranean feel, which I don't have an issue

with the design. I don't. I personally, when I look at the Aragon parking garage, that was designed with intent, with purpose, to look like that. Nobody can tell me that when you're inside the Aragon parking garage, you feel like you're having a great experience. The deck-to-deck height is very, very low. It's very dark in there, very dark in there. I think that the experience is not the most pleasant experience. Do I think that we need to go to 12-foot decks, keep it at 12? No, maybe we go to 11. Maybe we compromise, we go a foot down, we meet halfway. But I'd want the Manager to explain -- I think you brought up something very good about discarding -- what would happen if we if we decided to move in a direction in regards to cost savings? Are there any cost savings from moving away from the current design to a more Mediterranean design similar to what's going on in Aragon -- in the Aragon parking garage?

City Manager Iglesias: The -- we looked at that back then, the cost differential between the panels and precast at that time with the high aluminum prices was \$170,000.

Mayor Lago: More.

City Manager Iglesias: More for the aluminum at that time (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Lago: And now it's probably the inverse.

City Manager Iglesias: Now it's probably the inverse.

Mayor Lago: Because of the cost of construct -- because of the cost of labor and concrete. Concrete is at over \$150 a yard.

City Manager Iglesias: It's also heavier, Mayor, so you have to reinforce the structure...

Mayor Lago: Yep.

City Manager Iglesias: The foundations, et cetera, to handle the additional concrete. And then to remove the upper floor would save \$6.2 million at that time. And then to lower the eight column heights two feet would save -- would lower it 16 feet and save \$800,000. We go from 12 to 10.

Mayor Lago: I think what a good exercise is for the Commission, if you haven't had a chance, and I experienced it the other day, I had a business meeting in the Design District. I'm not saying that the skin has to look like that. I'm not saying that. Let's get away from the skin. Let's look at the actual -- the structure of the parking garage that's in the Design District. Go and look at that structure and just park your car and walk in and walk up the floors. I did that exercise when I had to go visit a client that's in that building. Because that serves as part commercial and part parking. When you experience that parking garage, it's a very different experience, a much more pleasant experience than basically going to park at the Aragon parking garage, which again, has very small windows. It was intended -- the design was intentional to give that Mediterranean feel. Again, if that's where we want to go, unless -- you know, you've got to add so much light and you've got to have -- the windows are very, very small. That's what I think we need to really take a look at if we're (INAUDIBLE)...

Commissioner Castro: I...

Commissioner Fernandez: I mean, I think they're pretty -- oh, sorry, go ahead.

Commissioner Castro: I always park in a garage, and I live in a condo. My office has a parking garage, and I never park looking for an experience, right? I'm not -- I'm just there to park, get in the elevator and get to wherever I'm getting, but I don't just get to the parking garage, and I'll be like, "What an experience." I mean, that's just my input.

Commissioner Fernandez: And I think the main concern that residents have had is the -- the shell of it. In fact, I think most of the meetings, people said, "We really don't care what you put inside. It's just, it has to look like it fits into Coral Gables, not that it fits into Brickell or Downtown

Miami.” I think that has been the main concern. And that’s -- again, we’re not talking about a complete redesign of a Mobility Hub because the inside is going to stay the same. It’s the shell that’s the biggest issue. And as far as lowering heights, you know, I think Commissioner Anderson hit the nail on the head. Every floor doesn’t have to be 12 feet high. You know, there could be some sort of compromise. Maybe the top two floors are 12 feet high and then we reduce the scale on the lower ones. Maybe remove one floor altogether. I mean, that may be another solution and that way you reduce the height. I think the fact that we’re allowed to build taller doesn’t mean that we have to. And if we’re saying that eventually we’re going to have to reduce the number of parking spaces, why build them? Why have the expense now? And I understand the Manager says, it’s this -- you know, 70 years down the road, the garage will probably still be around. We really can’t predict that. And I had a question for you, Director Kinney. What do you think the life expectancy of the current garage is before we need to do major structural repairs?

Commissioner Menendez: It died ten years ago.

Commissioner Fernandez: It died ten years ago.

Parking Director Kinney: Well, we actually have a structural engineer sitting on the dais, but what I can tell you is both the garages on Andalusia have -- are long past their expected life cycle.

Commissioner Fernandez: And I’ve seen cracking on the outside as well, so this is not something that we can continue to...

Parking Director Kinney: I need -- this is a public meeting. Our garages are safe.

Mayor Lago: Safe.

Commissioner Fernandez: All right, good.

Parking Director Kinney: Our garages are safe, and I have a structural engineer who tells me...

Commissioner Fernandez: All right.

Parking Director Kinney: They're safe. But if you're asking how much more time can we expect, I would defer that to somebody who has more expertise than myself.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, I...

Commissioner Menendez: I have a quick question. I apologize.

Commissioner Fernandez: Well, let's have -- if you can, let's have the Manager answer the question on the...

Commissioner Menendez: Oh, I'm sorry.

Commissioner Fernandez: On the structure.

Commissioner Menendez: Okay, I was all excited.

City Manager Iglesias: Can the garages be repaired? Yes. Can you have ongoing repairs? Yes. I think where the garages are, they're operationally obsolete right now. And that's the biggest issue, that these garages were designed -- Garage 4 doesn't have an elevator; Garage 1, in order to put an ADA elevator, you have to move so much of the structural work. It just does not become feasible, and the lanes are quite narrow, and there's no ADA accessibility. So, these are really not so much of a structural issue, but they're operationally obsolete.

Parking Director Kinney: I would follow up on what the Manager said, because even if we -- those few items that are ADA violations, even if we could repair those, just operationally and

functionally, there's so many issues in the garage that obsolete is probably the best word. Even if I put in an ADA elevator, how do I get the person from the elevator to the sidewalk? How do I get them from the elevator through the alley to Miracle Mile? All of those issues are, to be honest, not fixable without essentially tearing it down and starting from scratch.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, I'm going to just add a few more comments because I've done a lot of ADA work, and I do have a particular opinion about throwing good money after bad. Anytime that you're routing an individual in a wheelchair behind a vehicle, you've created something very dangerous. They'll get backed over; they'll get run over. And you probably heard before, my sister was run over. She fortunately lived through it. God was looking out for her. I have no idea how she survived it. But this is a real problem. And when I go out, and in the past, and I've inspected spaces, I would alert people. You go from the access aisle to an aisle, to and from the points of egress that is in front of the vehicles, not behind the vehicles. You never, ever want children or somebody in a wheelchair going behind the vehicles. We cannot fix this garage to accomplish that. So, that's why I say it's good money being thrown -- you know, good money for bad and it shouldn't be done. Aside from the structural issues, aside from the fact it's uncomfortable to park in and it's tight and obsolete, you know, obsolete. So, those are my comments, and I know you're itching to add a few more.

Commissioner Menendez: Well, every once in a while a thought comes into my mind.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Like a bird?

Commissioner Menendez: It's still coming in. It's five o'clock, but it's still working. So, one garage is 50 years old, the one near Publix, and the other one's 60 years old. 1960s, 1970s, more or less, right?

Parking Director Kinney: Yeah, '62 and '73.

Commissioner Menendez: That's the year I was born, and I'm obsolete. I feel that way every day so...

Vice Mayor Anderson: Oh, then I'm way past obsolete.

Commissioner Menendez: No, no, no, you're in another time zone. The reality is, question, what are the architectural designs of those two garages? Is it Art Deco? Is it Mediterranean? I mean, we have two garages. What are -- what's that kind of architecture?

Parking Director Kinney: There was an email we received, and I was told it's Brutalist architecture.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Brutalist, yes.

Parking Director Kinney: But...

Mayor Lago: Why did they...?

Parking Director Kinney: It's brutal.

Mayor Lago: (INAUDIBLE).

Parking Director Kinney: Yeah, it's brutal for certain.

Mayor Lago: So, why didn't they -- why didn't they consider Mediterranean design back then? It was -- you know, if you had so much -- so much importance based on the Med design, why wasn't that...?

Parking Director Kinney: Well, just my experience looking around -- and this is from an outsider. I've only lived here 16 years -- is in the 60s, it doesn't appear that what we talk about as Mediterranean now was as big a deal in the 60s. So, I mean, they built a garage that is typical of the 60s, but it is not designed for people.

Vice Mayor Anderson: It's neglected.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, it's also...

Parking Director Kinney: Yes.

City Manager Iglesias: It's also the use of the garage. The garage has to be a box because...

Mayor Lago: Of course.

City Manager Iglesias: You have to drive up and you have to be able to drive down. So, beautiful Mediterranean architecture has articulation and all kinds of issues like that. And you can't have articulation, because if you do, you block the driving lane and you can't get up. So, it's very difficult. One of the things that the Biltmore is so beautiful is it doesn't have a parking pedestal.

Mayor Lago: Yep.

City Manager Iglesias: It does not.

Mayor Lago: But it has a surface parking lot.

City Manager Iglesias: A surface parking lot. That's what makes it so beautiful a building. So, parking garages don't lend themselves very well because of the need for it to be a box. You have to have -- you have to be able to drive...

Mayor Lago: You need -- you need a box for efficiency purposes.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes.

Mayor Lago: It's the only way you get it done.

City Manager Iglesias: You can't drive (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Lago: It doesn't look good. Look, there -- we have a -- we have a long agenda, okay. I think that we've come -- and I don't want to speak for the whole Commission, but I think that we've come to the consensus that a parking garage is needed, right? Call it a Mobility Hub, call it a parking garage, call it whatever you want. It's needed for the future of the downtown. It is. It's going to -- it's not going to be paid by taxpayer dollars. It's going to be paid with parking revenue, correct? Correct?

City Manager Iglesias: That's correct.

Mayor Lago: All right. So, I think what we need to do is have a conversation with each one of us in regards to the aesthetic appeal of the building. I want everybody -- you said, Commissioner Castro said, "I don't go to a parking garage for an experience," but certain people go, like myself or other people who maybe do not feel comfortable in a parking garage, they want a more open feel to it. I don't think what we have at the Aragon parking garage is something that we should duplicate here. I think it's just way too dark for me and the more light that we put in it, it still becomes a light box anyways because you still have windows on it, one way or another. I think that we should have a conversation, each one of us, maybe have a Sunshine meeting, bring the design team, see how we can soften the design, talk about how will it look if you make 12-foot decks versus 11 versus 10, so people can really realize what the difference in height is. We're

talking about a floor and a few feet. That's what we're talking about. If you were to shave two feet off every single floor, that's 18 feet, correct?

City Manager Iglesias: It'd be -- it's actually eight rows of columns, 16.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, so we're talking about, it would literally be -- instead of being -- it would be a floor and a half smaller.

City Manager Iglesias: Instead of 116, it could be 100.

Mayor Lago: So, if you...

Commissioner Fernandez: But the difference...

Mayor Lago: If it's 11...

Commissioner Fernandez: But the difference is visible from Miracle Mile. And I think that's -- the main concern from residents is not so much on the road it's on, it's the look of the building towering over Miracle Theater. And I think that's where the concern from the community has come. I agree with you. I think a Sunshine meeting is...

Mayor Lago: You do understand -- you do understand that like, for example, private property rights across the street where the bank is and where the Barnes and Noble, they can build how many feet on that property?

City Manager Iglesias: Most of the back of Miracle Mile except for -- is MX3, 190.5.

Mayor Lago: They can build it as of right. That's a private piece of property that will be redeveloped, and that entire area, which is the bank plus the Barnes and Noble, and hopefully, we

can do a deal to cut that green space lot that we can -- that will come to us, and we'll have to make a decision, and we'll have to cut a deal where we'll say we want to keep that green space on Miracle Mile, what are we going to do? Do we let them just build it all the way to where the BurgerFi used to be, or do we try to do a deal where we give maybe a little additional height, some more FAR, some more density? Those are the type of negotiations that, as a Commission, we're going to start having. So, as a City, literally across the street from Ponce, someone's going to build 190 feet, so...

Commissioner Fernandez: And I (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Lago: If you're -- if you're...

Commissioner Fernandez: We have to control what we can control and that's our project.

Mayor Lago: I know.

Commissioner Fernandez: And that's -- the residents are expecting us to control our project.

Mayor Lago: I understand that.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, I think a Sunshine meeting would be great. I think that'll be an opportunity for residents as well. As you saw last night, I mean, I think that was the topic of conversation last night, one of the largest topics of conversation.

Commissioner Menendez: I want to chime in in terms of the -- personally, the purpose of the Sunshine meeting would be -- obviously, we're listening to residents, but for the design team to inform us of the different options, obviously talking about height and the height of the floors, but I want to make sure that...

Commissioner Fernandez: And design as well.

Commissioner Menendez: Of course, I agree. But I want that -- in Sunshine to -- folks to know it's for us, obviously the public can participate, but it's our opportunity to find a solution.

Mayor Lago: With the architect, I would like to see a graphic. If we do 12-foot decks, if we do 11-foot decks, if we do 10, how would it look? I want to see it. I want to see it on a piece of paper that says, look, this is what it would look like so that we can really understand if we are lowering a project by one story and what are the detrimental effects in regards to the aesthetic appeal of the building. And then we can talk about other issues and then ask the designer to come back and soften the following, change the following, and do the following. But we -- I think we can all agree -- can we all agree, because I think it's important as a Commission to agree on one thing, that we do need a parking garage in one form or another.

Commissioner Fernandez: Agreed.

Mayor Lago: And as long as it's not taxpayer dollars and it's coming from parking revenue, which is what it's always been, we agree that we need to strengthen the downtown.

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Okay, just want to make sure. Would you like to set a time? One second. Let me just speak to my colleagues one second so we can get an accomplishment on -- get a win as I call it. Let's get a win. Would you like to circulate times through the Clerk so we can all work together with staff on regards to a date in the next three weeks?

Commissioner Fernandez: Well, I think -- and we also need to rely on how long it will take them to come up with something. I don't think we can do something...

Mayor Lago: No, no, same here.

Commissioner Fernandez: It will take them some time to -- but I think, realistically, in the next, I guess, month and a half...

Mayor Lago: Month, whatever it may be.

Commissioner Fernandez: Let's realistically...

Commissioner Menendez: Circulate dates and see what will...

City Manager Iglesias: I can give the Commission the information from Gensler...

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: At the next Commission meeting to set that up.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, I think we also do need to give Gensler some direction.

Commissioner Fernandez: Agreed.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Take a look at what was presented before, if you have other ideas, just say I prefer this way, or you want a green garage, you want an open garage, you want a different panel, whatever it is, some direction. You want Art Deco, you want this, you know, design.

Mayor Lago: So, why don't we start thinking about that? No rooftop amenity. I like the rooftop amenity, but some people may not. We'll take a vote on it. Rooftop amenity versus -- I'd rather

have the parking garage -- a parking garage in that location versus what's currently there, even if I have to give up the rooftop amenity. So, let's -- do we give the rooftop amenity? Let's see it with and without. Let's see it different heights.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, I would ask the City Manager also to give us an idea of, you know, the rooftop amenity is, like I said, a piece of real estate. If you had a piece of real estate that large in the middle of downtown like that, what's it worth? You know, you can get back to us. You know, in order to evaluate cost and benefits, you need to have that information.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Menendez: Sounds good.

Mayor Lago: All right. Mr. Manager, we'll do that. Commissioner Anderson, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Kinney. Commissioner Anderson has deferred G-6.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, are you going to take public comment on G-10?

Mayor Lago: Yes, I am. I thought we had it, but I missed it.

Unidentified Speaker: I'm sorry.

Mayor Lago: My bad. Go ahead.

City Clerk Urquia: First speaker is Sue Kawalerski.

Sue Kawalerski: Again, Sue Kawalerski, 6830 Gratian Street. Almost good evening.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Close.

Ms. Kawalerski: I want to say the tenor and the tone of this discussion that we've just heard is very good. This is pretty much in line with what the residents have wanted all along before we spent \$2.3 million. My only concern at this point, if we're going to have a Sunshine meeting with a whole new concept or new concepts presented, how much is that -- is Gensler going to charge us to come up with new designs? Because if they're going to say, "That'll be another million dollars," my suggestion would be, find another design firm because they have failed so far. They have failed what the residents want. Find another design firm that can actually do what the residents want and not this. This is one size fits all, that's all we're providing you. But before you have the Sunshine meeting, please let the residents know how much that's going to cost for new designs because there's going to be a cost to it. I'm sure, City Manager, they're not going to do this for free, correct?

City Manager Iglesias: Well, I just -- since you mentioned that, we don't use design fees just willy-nilly. We look at design fees based on State of Florida architectural engineering fee calculator. That methodology defines projects that are from A, considerably more complex, similar to a police station, to projects that are considerably less than average of complexity, which is a warehouse, which is a warehouse, parking garages, and storage facilities. We used between a fee that was based between E and F, which is E is less than average complexity, and F is considered to be less than average complexity. So, that is what we used in the state calculator for -- which is by Department of Management Services to determine this fee. So, just -- so I just wanted to mention that because that fee's been thrown around as to how do we come up with this fee, right? And this is the standard way of government using the state process to come up with a design fee. So, this is on the low end because -- because it goes from A to G, and this is between E and F. In other words, between less than average complexity to considerably less than average complexity, so it falls just above a parking garage as far as how this fee was actually generated. So, I will discuss with Gensler what it's going to take for this because it's basically -- could be a redesign or a conceptual redesign, and then we'll get back to the Commission next week. But this is how this fee was actually calculated. And this is done all the time. And this is how we did -- and this is

how we do projects. We don't come up with our own fee. We come up with what the state -- with the State of Florida suggests and what they use, and that's how we come up with the fee.

Commissioner Fernandez: And we just sent them another \$250,000, correct?

City Manager Iglesias: This is -- this is based on having some additional work based -- that was not part of the original contract but based on less than average complexity and considerably less than average complexity.

Commissioner Fernandez: Right, no, I'm saying there was recently an item to move \$250,000 to the Mobility Hub from transportation funds.

City Manager Iglesias: This contract has been there for some time so...

Commissioner Fernandez: I mean, my understanding is there was \$250,000 that were recently moved from the fund.

City Manager Iglesias: Recently, by when? We haven't...

Commissioner Fernandez: I guess this last quarter.

City Manager Iglesias: We haven't worked -- we haven't worked on this project. We've put a stop to the actual project -- we're doing permitting -- because the costs are so high right now that we've stopped the construction manager and Gensler from wrapping up some parts of this project until we get a grip on construction costs because of escalation. And then we're going to -- so we were planning on gearing this project back up towards the third -- in the third quarter or fourth quarter of this year.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay. You know, we can have a lot of discussion between this meeting and the next meeting. There's been other residents giving ideas about a contest, et cetera. We can flush that -- flush that out. Some of the last designs I put forth were just to change the panels, okay, in order to minimize the amount of cost difference. That's all.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, who's next?

Ms. Kawalerski: Excuse me, excuse me, sir.

City Manager Iglesias: (INAUDIBLE).

Ms. Kawalerski: Mayor, I have another point to make, please. But I do not want it lost that before we spend another penny that residents would like to know how much more we have to spend for another design.

Mayor Lago: We'll find out and we'll get back to you.

Commissioner Fernandez: I think we'll get an update next Commission meeting, Mr. Clerk.

City Manager Iglesias: Next Commission meeting. I will speak to Gensler.

Vice Mayor Anderson: All right.

Commissioner Fernandez: Would you put it on the agenda?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes.

Ms. Kawalerski: And I have one more point to make on this subject. It seems like remote parking, the remote parking ordinance that this Commission authorized within the past couple of years,

means that developers don't have to park cars on their property. When they build a building, they don't have to have parking on their property any longer.

Mayor Lago: That's not -- just a point of clarity, that's not correct. Mr. Manager, can you give a little bit of clarity in regards to whether developers, when they develop their building, whether they can -- they don't have to provide parking?

City Manager Iglesias: There's a fee for remote parking. We also lowered the height to 50 feet on Miracle Mile.

Mayor Lago: The only place we have remote parking...

City Manager Iglesias: There are issues to doing that, and one of the -- and one -- one of the issues that we did concerning Bert Harris issues was have an appraisal, look at what the cost of remote parking was to the cost of parking to a structure and we worked that out with the City Attorney's Office to make sure that we didn't have a Bert Harris issues on the Mile. So, that was done for those particular reasons.

Ms. Kawalerski: All right, all I'm saying is...

Mayor Lago: It's called a reduction...

Ms. Kawalerski: They do not have to...

Mayor Lago: It's called a reduction in parking, it's not a removal of parking.

Ms. Kawalerski: Okay, and all I'm saying -- and I'll repeat it again -- they do not have to provide parking in their buildings, in their properties, as per the remote parking ordinance.

Mayor Lago: They do have to provide -- they do have to provide parking in their buildings as required...

Ms. Kawalerski: Not on site, not on site, correct?

Mayor Lago: It's required as per the use of the building. The only area that is not required to have parking -- and we did it so we can make sure that we make Miracle Mile low scale and we don't force -- and we don't allow people to build parking pedestals, which in my opinion and the opinion of the Commission at that point thought that it was not a very aesthetically pleasing look -- was on Miracle Mile. The rest of the City, you have to provide parking in designated areas. You have to pay into a parking fund. It's very clear. I can get you a copy of that ordinance if you like.

Ms. Kawalerski: I perfectly -- Mayor, I perfectly understand it. I was at all those meetings. As I will restate for the third time, they do not have to provide parking on site. Okay, with that said -- with that said, if I'm a Miracle Mile developer, like Mr. Patel, I don't have to build parking. It would be very convenient for the City to build my parking on City lots, and that's where the Mobility Hub is going to be located. My question, how much of this parking lot will be devoted to developers? And if any portion is for a developer, whether it be they have to lease the space or they rent it in perpetuity, why doesn't the developer pay for the cost of the parking lot?

City Manager Iglesias: Just to be clear, you cannot provide parking on the Mile. It was removed. You cannot provide a parking pedestal on the Mile. We don't want cars going through the streetscape, so parking on the Mile has been removed.

Ms. Kawalerski: I understand that. That's not my question.

City Manager Iglesias: (INAUDIBLE) remote parking. And second, this parking garage does not belong to any developer. This parking garage belongs to the City and there's no parking in this garage that will be provided to any developer to make up for the remote parking that has...

Ms. Kawalerski: Okay, is that on the record that no space in this new garage will be for the benefit of a developer, that you will not lease spaces to developers?

Mayor Lago: I'll make it easy for you. Mr. Director, have we ever talked about giving space to people or a developer in this building?

Parking Director Kinney: We've...

Mayor Lago: In the proposed project.

Parking Director Kinney: Done a long-term lease in a public facility once on the roof. Speaking to the remote parking ordinance, any developer on the Mile has to pay into the fund, they have to show remote parking. They could come to the Commission and say, "Will you lease for 10 years spaces in your garage?" That is not how we manage our public garages. Our public garages are open to the public. Like I said, in the 16 years I've been here, we leased spaces on the roof of Garage 6 one time to one vendor.

Mayor Lago: I know, I know, trust me, I know that. And by the way, the fund, the proposed reasoning for the remote parking fund, what would that -- what would those funds be used for?

Parking Director Kinney: They are only allowed to be used for public parking development and improvements -- improvements and upgrades. So, they have to be used in the transportation...

Mayor Lago: That's always been in the record and that's always been what the plan was. It's never been changed. It's always been to ensure that we have a vehicle, just like Coconut Grove. We modeled it after the one in Coconut Grove where those funds are used to maintain our existing parking garages or to build new parking garages.

Parking Director Kinney: Develop new parking.

Mayor Lago: How many developers have taken advantage of remote parking since it was instituted?

Parking Director Kinney: I would have to sit down with Diana.

Mayor Lago: Less than...

Parking Director Kinney: It's not a big number.

Mayor Lago: It's less than a handful?

Parking Director Kinney: It's -- we may have generated maybe \$2 million in the years that we've done it.

Mayor Lago: It's not been that much.

Parking Director Kinney: Yeah.

Ms. Kawalerski: And by the way, the reason I asked is because Mr. Kinney told me specifically during the whole discussion on the Mobility Hub way back when that some 20 percent of the spaces would be available for leasing to developers.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Kinney, are you aware of that -- of that comment?

Parking Director Kinney: What I know is we're building space in this location because any development that happens on the Mile will increase demand. So, we're planning for increased demand.

Mayor Lago: Of course.

Parking Director Kinney: We have no plan to have a long-term remote parking agreement with any developer on the Mile. The facility will be open to the public and we do sell monthly permits, so there may be a tenant in a building on the Mile that can purchase a monthly permit from the City, or their customers can park in the garage and pay.

Mayor Lago: And those are conversations that we had for a long time when we were talking about remote parking, and we were talking about the parking garage. Because for example, MPA, what I've seen them do is they'll rent parking spaces all the way in the top, and they'll leave the bottom spaces for people who are coming to enjoy the retail and visit the downtown and enjoy a restaurant. Because you know, you want -- you don't want -- you want the people who are going to leave their cars all day to drive all the way to the top, and then people to have the most pleasant experience by parking in the first, second, third, or fourth floor.

City Manager Iglesias: It's similar to a garage -- and Mayor, at the roof level where it's exposed to the sun.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, and -- yeah.

City Manager Iglesias: People don't want to use it.

Mayor Lago: So -- and I wanted to mention that too. So, if a developer came to me, or let's say a company like Mercedes-Benz came to me and says, Vince, you built this beautiful garage. The City built this beautiful garage across from Bulla, and you have this older parking garage in front of Publix that's getting less and less use because people want to park in the new one. It's a lot more friendly, it's a better experience. I can charge my car there, I can potentially visit the retail establishments, it's closer to whatever shop that I'm going to. I don't have any data, but I think,

just by common sense, that that parking garage is going to get a lot less use because people would rather be in a more modern, state-of-the-art facility. So -- we talked about this. If Mercedes-Benz came and says, we would love to rent the entire top of that parking garage to store cars at \$150 a month, and the City could potentially make some nice revenue, \$20,000 a month by renting 150 spaces, 120 spaces that are empty, I don't have an issue with that. As long as there's space in a facility and no one is using them, especially in areas like the top of a parking garage which are exposed to the sun and nobody wants to leave their car there all day, I don't have an issue with that. And that's what I foresee happening in that parking garage because people would want to use the new facility versus the old one.

Parking Director Kinney: The only qualification I would make to that is I would expect either me or the person who is in my position next to come to you and...

Mayor Lago: Of course.

Parking Director Kinney: Honestly say, yes, that's excess space and we can do a long-term lease.

Mayor Lago: And by the way, we can always do a 60-day out. We can always do a 90-day out.

Parking Director Kinney: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: And say, look, for some reason we're getting a lot of use in that parking garage and the residents want to use it or the visitors to the downtown. We're going to make more money renting it by the hour than we are by renting it long-term, and we can get ourselves out of that lease.

Parking Director Kinney: In fact, we did exactly that when we allowed the Palace to rent the Mercedes-Benz, and when the demand returned, we said, no, Mercedes needs to move out.

Mayor Lago: All right.

Ms. Kawalerski: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: The next -- next point.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker, Mr. Mayor, is Debra Register.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Register.

Debra Register: Debra Register, 1240 Placetas Avenue. There's a lot of topics today, folks. I'm glad, too, that the change of direction of this parking garage is going. My -- what I want you to think about is that -- the age of the other one. We will be having to replace that shortly. Okay, so we will have excess space there. We might go a little higher. Okay, so when you do one, have a concept for the other one because it's coming shortly.

Commissioner Menendez: That's a good point.

Ms. Register: And it might be sooner than you think. So, when you do this, look at both of them as to what's going to happen.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Well, I mean, we can -- we could have that discussion. I would hope that one building would fit all of our use. We can look at that when we get to that milestone.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Ms. Register: Okay.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker is Gordon Sokoloff.

Gordon Sokoloff: Good evening. Thank you. First of all, I think it's -- I've noticed a bit of compromise here. And I think one of the offensive parts of this whole project was that original rendering, that original drawing and photo of the Mobility Hub as presented was really offensive. It was -- it did not fit in at all with the neighborhood and I would consider myself an expert on that parking garage. I parked there and paid for my staff for 23 years. And by the way, that lot happens to be open. I mean, there aren't windows. It's a pretty open, airy lot. I never found it too objectionable. It absolutely needs to be updated, taken down and updated and modernized. So, I think that can be done. I would like to say congratulations to Mr. Iglesias for the vote of confidence you received. One of the things I think hopefully you learned from this, and I hope this Commission has, is that when you're talking about a building that's going to be, you know, paid for by the City, it's nice to offer more than one selection, more than one version from the designer. And so what you're proposing now to bring it to an architectural firm, whether it's the same one or a different one, to propose different designs, is something we all wanted to begin with. And the Mayor, you talked about doing this already for Burger Bob's, which is a fraction of the square footage of this building. And this building is not a little spot on a golf course, it's at the intersection of Main and Main. It is the main parking garage that Mr. Kinney has referred to. The design should be looked at by the residents. I appreciate that. I don't think anyone will object with anything anyone has said. We want it safe. We want it well lit. We want it ADA friendly. We want all those things. But there are a lot of different designs of relatively new parking garages around town. Like if you go to Brickell City Center, that's a pretty new garage and it is kind of cave-like. I personally don't like that one. I've been going to Lennar, unfortunately, for their medical facility there, but that garage is fantastic. You know, it's open, it's airy, it's large, it's modern, and it's not offensive looking. And of course, Miami Beach, the famous parking garage developed by Robert Wennett over by Lincoln Road is gorgeous. And there are many parking

garages there that have gorgeous designs, and some of them, Commissioner Anderson, are adorned by plants and greenery that actually hang down, which can make for an interesting aesthetic addition. So, I don't think -- it doesn't necessarily have to be Mediterranean, but if it's Mediterranean or Art Deco, that will blend in with the Miracle Theater, the iconic Miracle Theater that it's sitting immediately adjacent to. I think that will satisfy a lot of the residents. And lastly, one of the points I also made about the City Manager's role in all this and something that I'm going to insist upon and say, this Commission is going to be gone at some point, but the staff, out of due respect, stays. They're the constant. And as they stay, our buildings, whether it be the Venetian Pool or Salvadore Park, this very building and this new garage that we're negotiating all this money on, it better be maintained. Because the garage that's there now, which I parked in for 23 years, has constantly had broken elevators. It did have cameras in there once upon a time. They were never manned, to the best of my knowledge. So, there was an interest in making them safe, but that never took place. So, if you're going to have cameras, maintain them. If you're going to build this thing at our expense, make sure it's maintained in perpetuity, whether this Commission is still here or not so that residents down the line aren't complaining like we've heard today. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Jackson "Rip" Holmes.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Holmes.

Jackson "Rip" Holmes: Mayor, forgive me, you should have given me more time. The -- we're getting even right this minute, a lot of misinformation. And I reiterate my previous point that there's been a failure by Commissioner Fernandez to bring experts to the table, a failure by the Coral Gables Neighbor Association to bring experts to the table. We've gotten a -- what are two big items of misinformation that have been -- the City has been deluged with last night and today? One is that this -- what was just said right now that this is being paid by taxpayer expense. No, it's not. Mayor, you are the one who refuted that very convincingly. It was reaffirmed by the City

Manager that the Parking Division is paying for this. It's not being paid for -- these price tags of misinformation we've been getting deluged with are false information. The Parking Department is going to -- this is a self-paying proposition here. Another piece of misinformation that we've had to try to contend with is the idea that all these garages are vacant right now. Mayor, you helped Parking Director Kinney refute that. It's refuted. The misinformation should stop. Finally, I'm holding absolutely 100 percent to Gensler's safe and transparent design. We need safety here. We have -- there's a ripple effect on -- for instance, I keep referring to these unions that I like. We're hiring more firefighters, finally. We're hiring more police officers, which is what the -- talk about what the residents want. They want good fire protection, but who's going to pay for it? We need a safe garage where women can come shop complete -- they'll be encouraged to come shop on Miracle Mile with the Gensler transparent design. The one concession I would say that we could make, the only one is -- and please, count me as absolutely supporting the design that's been approved with this just one concession. At night, the lights can probably be turned off, so you don't have a garish thing at night. That would reduce safety, but I can understand if people say, "Well, we don't want this all lit up at night." So, from midnight to, let's say, sunrise or what have you, then the lights go off. Otherwise, I am absolutely asking you to stick with the design we have. Kevin Kinney has reaffirmed to me just last night, this is not only the safest garage in the state of Florida, which brings money to our city. Women are the shoppers. If we make them feel safe, they'll want to come here more often and spend more money. It's not only the safest garage for certain in the state of Florida, Mr. Kinney thinks it's probably the safest garage in the entire United States.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, my friend.

Mr. Holmes: We cannot forego that opportunity.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Thomas O'Malley.

Mayor Lago: Mr. O'Malley, welcome back.

Thomas O'Malley: Thank you, sir.

Mayor Lago: Always a pleasure.

Mr. O'Malley: I guess I'm the guy he was talking about. So, there was a parking lot built in the '60s, and we talk about difficulty for access, but you young people up here don't remember '64 Chevys, Chryslers, Cadillacs.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Wait a second now.

Mr. O'Malley: I'm giving you the benefit of a doubt, okay?

Vice Mayor Anderson: My father had a '57 Chevrolet.

Mr. O'Malley: Pretty big, huh?

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yeah, pretty big.

Mr. O'Malley: And those vehicles accessed. In the '70s, there were vans, not minivans, real vans, and they managed to access.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Better drivers, what can I say?

Mr. O'Malley: Well, okay, that's -- I'll give you that. So, we...

Vice Mayor Anderson: Harder bumpers.

Mr. O'Malley: So, we talked a little bit about the current building, and we said it's too dark. Well, if it's too dark, we can put lights in. That's not too expensive. And I agree that the access, not only for handicapped, but for real people, I mean, real pedestrians who go in there, park their car, try to walk out, is not safe. The only way it's safe is to go through that little passageway throughout to Miracle Mile. But if you want to go to the Spanish restaurant, not so easy to get in and out of that garage. But those things can be fixed. So, I don't think we ought to go knock down the garage because there's some things that need to be -- that can be addressed. Plus the elevator, there's no reason why that elevator should be broken. But I realized that this Commission is facing a real conundrum because they're faced with, what do we do with this building, and how do we support business on the Miracle Mile or in the immediate area? This building is going to cost a lot of money. No matter what the dollar amount is, it's a lot of money. And it has to be at a fee that people are going to be willing to pay and then go to restaurants and go shopping and do whatever they need to do. And that's a big problem now because the costs are just skyrocketing for everything. So, there was a pro forma income statement completed a year and a half ago -- so it can be updated and be happy to participate -- at a \$40 million purchase price for a new garage, annual loss to the City would be \$1.5 million. There would not be enough revenue generated at the garage to pay for it. And that included -- that study also included projections for rate increases for parking for three years. So, when people say this is going to be funded by revenues generated by people who park there, in order for that to occur, there'd have to be really significant rate increases to pay for that. Because at the current pricing level, or even if you take it up 50 cents -- 50 cents per visit or 50 cents an hour, it's not going to pay. At a \$62 million building, you're talking a \$2.5 million loss per year. So, if we're going to talk about buildings and how much it's going to cost, I think there needs to be a pro forma income statement prepared to show where the money is going to come from to pay for -- to pay for this -- excuse me, pay for the garage. And last -- excuse me, and lastly, my request about a parking lot next to Abbracci, that's not frivolous, Mayor. If we're talking about knocking down a building that holds 600 -- I don't know how many spots right now, 600, 500, and it's going to be out of commission for two years, that's going to be devastating. So, maybe we need to take a look at building a lot, a parking garage next to Abbracci

first and then approaching a lot, a rebuild at the parking lot. And oh, by the way, I agree that parking lot needs to be there as well. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: So, I'm going to address you right now, but please take a seat. I sat down with this gentleman and the Manager and our Finance Director and went over all these information and it was corrected on the record. Madam Director, Finance Director, will you come up again, once again, we'll do it again. I think we did it two years ago and we'll do the whole show in regards to what is the revenue, where are we going to get the money from, how is it going to pay for itself, how much we have to increase parking? Because remember when we went over this with this gentleman and it was -- we explained it very clearly, very coherently in regards to how we would address it financially, but we'll do it again...

Finance Director Gomez: All right, so...

Mayor Lago: For the record.

Finance Director Gomez: So, at this point, I haven't updated these numbers in quite some time. So, this is -- these are the numbers that I have on my computer from last time when I did it, which was in 2022 sometime. And so I've never shown a loss. We've never shown a loss based on the revenues projected for this garage. There were some considerations, whether we were going to keep or sell Garage 4. That was a discussion at the time, and so we had different numbers. And so, for example, in year -- what would be the year one of whatever year after it's operational, if we were going to keep Garage 4 and not sell it, it would have been about -- well, I guess on average, it would be about half a million dollars of surplus revenues over expenditures. If we were to sell Garage 4, then it would be closer to seven hundred -- no, a million dollars a year of surplus because we would use the proceeds, Garage 4...

Mayor Lago: Garage 4 -- Garage 4 revenue.

Finance Director Gomez: To pay down the debt so we wouldn't have to have the debt service...

Mr. O'Malley: So, it's \$500,000 or a million dollars? You said the...

Finance Director Gomez: So, again, two different scenarios I'm talking about.

Mr. O'Malley: Okay.

Finance Director Gomez: If we keep Garage 4 -- right? -- in that scenario at that time -- this is data from that time. I have not updated this data. It was roughly half a million dollars of surplus, right? So, then year one, it might've been 900,000, year two might've been 200,000, and then it kind of averaged out to about 400,000 every year. So, that's what I'm saying. It's about 4 or \$500,000 if we were to keep Garage 4, meaning I did not get extra funds to pay down the debt service.

Unidentified Speaker: Yeah.

Finance Director Gomez: And then if we were to sell Garage 4 and use that money -- the revenue or the sale price of that and apply that to pay down the debt -- the amount of debt we would have taken out, it would have been about a million dollars of -- actually, it starts off at a million, come -- drops down to about six hundred thousand, and then it starts climbing up to one and a half million in future years. So, again, very old, not updated numbers, different assumptions, maybe with interest rates and things like that, and the amount of the construction, a lot of different factors. I have not redone these numbers recently.

Mr. O'Malley: And that takes into account the rental of retail space as well.

Finance Director Gomez: Parking revenues, it does -- the real estate taxes and the event space and rental income, yes.

Mayor Lago: So, what I would like to do is include this information in our Sunshine meeting.

Mr. O'Malley: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: But this was -- will you agree with me that this information was provided to this gentleman in a meeting that we had?

Finance Director Gomez: Yes.

Mayor Lago: And...

Finance Director Gomez: And I think we also did it at a Commission meeting.

Mayor Lago: And we did it at a Commission meeting.

Finance Director Gomez: Or at a workshop of some sort.

Mayor Lago: And we refuted -- and we refuted these numbers.

Finance Director Gomez: Right.

Mayor Lago: Now, on the record, under oath, the problem is when you say this and you repeat it enough, it becomes the truth. Like I've had people come up to me and tell me, "Hey, I read online that, you know, the Mobility Hub is going to cost \$160 million. It's going to cost \$100 million." We have to be very careful with the things that we say, and we have to be able to, on the record, on the fly -- she probably hasn't looked at these numbers in a year.

Finance Director Gomez: At least, I haven't.

Mayor Lago: At least a year because we've been dealing with the issues of permitting the project and kind of putting it on ice in regards to whether we're moving forward or not due to the cost of construction right now. So, these are things that I would like for the Commission to have in their hands in preparation for a Sunshine meeting so we can discuss it, taking into consideration the new interest rates and the cost of construction to kind of see where we stand. I have always been an opponent of selling Lot 4. I have not wanted to. I have also asked the Manager to potentially think about ideas on how maybe we could build multifamily there, have some housing, do a deal, or maybe that -- maybe that -- maybe that -- a part of the proceeds could be used. We keep the land, we don't sell the land, and we build something there that could benefit that area of North Gables with some apartments, and then maybe we could use some of the proceeds to pay down the debt of having to build a parking garage. So, those are things that I would ask all of you to consider having a conversation with the Manager and we can do it on the Sunshine, okay.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, can that sheet that you have be shared with us and we can update it with new information as we have it available?

Mayor Lago: Of course, of course.

Finance Director Gomez: Yes, I can give you the sheet that I currently have.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Right.

Finance Director Gomez: I have not yet looked into it. I have not updated the numbers in quite some time. If that is...

Commissioner Fernandez: Right, by the Sunshine meeting, we're asking that you update the -- the numbers.

Commissioner Castro: When is the Sunshine meeting?

Commissioner Fernandez: We don't have a date, probably in the next month and a half.

Mayor Lago: We got to -- we still have to talk -- the Manager has...

Commissioner Fernandez: Right.

Mayor Lago: To talk to Gensler, so we have time.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, we still -- we have time.

Finance Director Gomez: Okay, yes.

Mayor Lago: Perfect, thank you.

Finance Director Gomez: Thank you. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker is Ms. Maria Cruz.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Cruz, the floor is yours.

Maria Cruz: Good afternoon, pretty soon to be evening. Are you there?

Commissioner Fernandez: We're here.

Vice Mayor Anderson: We're here.

Commissioner Castro: We're here.

Vice Mayor Anderson: We hear you.

Ms. Cruz: Okay. I have some comments. Number one. Number one is the one that worries me the most. We went this route before. Gensler was told to go back and come back with some changes to please...

Commissioner Fernandez: I think we lost you.

Ms. Cruz: (INAUDIBLE). Where are the changes? They said, no, we decided we couldn't do any changes. So, be very careful because they would like to do this. This is their hope, their dream, their desire. And we will not be agreeable to building a Brickell Disney garage, and I'm glad that we're calling it garage and not Mobility Hub because we certainly do not want the drones parking on the roof. Okay, this is not a commercial area. This is -- this is not an industrial area. We do not need to have those big drones coming from the airport to drop off packages on top of our building. Okay, that's not the purpose of the building. That's number one. Number two, it really fascinates me to hear that we don't have to worry about the money because the money is going to be produced by the parking. Any money that's produced in the City is my concern. If the parking is going to produce money, excellent. But that doesn't mean that we should just spend money that we don't have to because it's coming from the proceeds, so we can do whatever we want. Okay, we have to be very smart and use the proceeds from parking, you know, wisely, not just deciding since we're not taking our general fund, we can do whatever we want with it. That's one. I like the idea that we're talking. I think it's about time. It's taken quite a long time to convince the Administration that we needed to talk about this. I think most people would like to see something either Mediterranean -- I think Art Deco, because of the location, will be acceptable. But we certainly do not want a Disney World look like the one that we have presented. The fact that the area is zoned for 190 doesn't mean we have to be 190. The theater is not 190. We don't have to. And I'm sorry, I'm tired of getting scared. Well, you know, the other people could build 100 and 500. Doesn't make any difference to me. We are proposing something for the City to

build. We should be the ones leading the way. We do not want massive, gigantic buildings in our city. And if we don't lead the way, the other people are going to come back with more. Because if we build 190, maybe they get some FARs or whatever you call them, TDRs, FARs, bonuses, they could build 300.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.

Ms. Cruz: No, no, no, no.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, so we need to consider that. Excuse me, you didn't cut off the other people.

Mayor Lago: I know, but we have a very long agenda.

Ms. Cruz: Hello.

Mayor Lago: I'm asking if you would be so kind.

Ms. Cruz: I know, but the other people spoke, and you didn't cut them off.

Mayor Lago: I'm not cutting you off. I'm asking...

Ms. Cruz: I'm sorry.

Mayor Lago: You very kindly if you would please bring it in for a landing so that we can...

Ms. Cruz: Let me wrap it up.

Mayor Lago: So that we can wrap it up.

Ms. Cruz: Yes. Yes, I'll do my best to wrap it up. But you know, the rules can't be different from different people.

Mayor Lago: I don't treat anybody differently.

Ms. Cruz: My goodness.

Mayor Lago: Everybody can speak. Please.

Ms. Cruz: Okay. I think the big thing to consider is we don't need a massive, no space around the building. We need to make something that will make us proud, that the people will be proud, that we like it, and we agree with it. And I definitely do not think that -- we need to stay away from the Mobility Hub name and make it what it is, a parking garage. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker is Ed Santamaria.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Santamaria, the floor is yours.

Commissioner Castro: Where is he?

Commissioner Fernandez: Is he here?

Ed Santamaria: Good afternoon, all. Can you hear me?

Mayor Lago: Oh, from Zoom. Yes, sir.

Mr. Santamaria: Okay, fantastic. So, this is a great discussion. I appreciate the fact that the atmosphere of cooperation and communication is in the air. There's a couple of things that concern me that I think I should bring to light. Number one is I hear all this talk about residents and we and this and that, and no one's ever asked me my opinion on this subject matter, and I have not given it either. So, to say that there's a group of people speaking for all the residents of Coral Gables, or speaking as we, I think that that's not correct. I'm sure there are a lot of people that like the -- let's call it the parking structure -- the way it's designed. And to me, in my mind, having it next to the Miracle Theater is just like having a modern building next to an old building in Boston, one of our most historic assets. And so it happens everywhere throughout the world where you have this juxtaposition of the old and the new and historic. In fact, I think it bears reverence to the historic and highlights it because of the contrast. But I don't mean to veer into the world of architecture. That's not my field. What I'd like to say is that we really need to give this a lot of thought. The fact that the building is a certain height, I think, maximizes the use of that building and it makes it future ready, future proof. In the future, when there has -- this building has to be repurposed for whatever reason it may be, to have an eight-foot ceiling, a nine-foot ceiling, it's just not going to work. That's why you need the ceiling heights that have been designed into this building. And so really what it comes down to is the fact that we need something to replace the existing garage. It's obsolete, it's not very functional, and it's due time. If we don't make this call right now, it's just kicking the can down the road, and I find that to be financially irresponsible, and it would not be a service to the community at large. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Very well said. Thank you very much.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker, Mr. Mayor, is Ms. Karelia Carbonell.

Mayor Lago: This is the last speaker?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir.

Mayor Lago: I'd like to close the public comment.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Menendez: She wants sustainability. I know that.

Mayor Lago: Karelia, the floor is yours.

Karelia Carbonell: Hi there.

Mayor Lago: Hi.

Ms. Carbonell: Hi there, everyone. Yes, I have -- I think I've emailed or texted the Commissioners, and really, my -- I really am disappointed that I have not heard one discussion about sustainable development. And all I hear is we need a new building when that building can be repurposed -- readapted to be reused as a garage. Because of what I hear, it does have issues, but why have the first option be a demolition? And that's where I think the City needs to start thinking before developing. If you see the old public safety building, that was slated for demolition. Mercedes-Benz, I commend them for seeing the beauty not only of the building but to seeing the environmental issues with the demolition. And they're repurposing it and readapting it. And it's going to be a beautiful addition to their showroom. So, why not are we just thinking about demolishing something, all that concrete, all that environmental debris, when it could be at least an option on the table. I'm not saying that it could be the only option, but I think we need it as an option on the table. And the reason I say that is because -- and I'm going to read part of the letter that I sent to you all. I'm not going to read the whole thing. But there is not only financial cost, but there's that environmental cost. And I -- I really don't hear that from anyone. And I really would love, as a preservationist and now as a -- really an environmentalist in terms of it's merged, to hear that kind of conversation. There is the demolishing the existing garage. It was built in

1952. It is a Brutalist style. That's when government buildings were of that style. It's harmonious to that area. And so if we keep that vision, that garage interior -- the interior of the garage can certainly be brought up to Code and be brought up to date and be, you know, given, you know, as much bells and whistles as possible. But we -- you know, it is already a harmonious structure in that area. And I don't know if, you know -- you know, it really is catastrophic, you know, for demolition to, you know -- a demolition is -- really should be the last option I think we should all be discussing. And finally, Gensler, okay, who was paid \$2 million, who is the designer of this Mobility Hub is at the forefront of adapting older structures with the objective to reduce embodied carbon. So, for example, one recent Gensler project reduced by 68 percent the carbon footprint of what new construction would be. So, Gensler can certainly adapt an existing garage. So, the 10-story garage really is something that -- please consider as an option an adaptive reuse of the structure. And Gensler is one of the leading architects doing that.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Ms. Carbonell: So, I would like to see that as an option when we do discuss the design. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: I appreciate that. Thank you very much. Thank you. All right, so I think we have a, not a schedule, but an idea of having a Sunshine meeting. We've given staff some direction through the City Manager. And unless there's any other statements or questions that like to be made on the record, I think we're moving in a direction.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Well, the only other thing I'd like the City Manager to share with others is whether or not it's going to be -- look at whether the feasibility of doing carbon sequestration and the -- using CarbonCure technology in the cement that we use in the building. Whether we're at a point we can do that, I know they do it in other cities. Do we have a provider? Can we encourage it?

Mayor Lago: All right, perfect.

Vice Mayor Anderson: That would solve the adaptive reuse problem, I think, with the carbon impact.

Mayor Lago: Perfect. Can we move forward?

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes, please.

Mayor Lago: All right.