

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-1
February 25, 2025
Police and Fire Headquarters
2151 Salzedo Street, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

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

City Staff

City Manager, Alberto N. Parjus
City Attorney, Cristina Suárez
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Community Recreation Director, Fred Couceyro

Public Speaker(s)

Paul Susz
Patrick Alexander

Agenda Item F-1 [10:38 a.m.]

Discussion regarding the Granada Golf Course rain shelters.
(Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: Moving on to time certain, 10 a.m., Agenda Item F-1. I placed this item on the agenda. I'm the sponsor of this item, and I'd like to invite our Parks Director, Fred Couceyro, to join us. And the reason why I did that was because I've had multiple meetings with members of the community to discuss the Granada Golf Course rain shelters. And after sitting down with Mr. Alexander in my office the other day during office hours, we were reviewing some of the previous designs and kind of where we -- where the project, I don't want to say stumbled, but it just kind of

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sputtered, and it's been a necessity in the community, but it hasn't really been pushed forward. I wanted to bring to my colleagues the opportunities that exist. There's current designs in place, but after you listen to a lot of the residents, they want something a little bit more classical in nature in the sense that harkens back to the original days of the Granada Golf Course. But then you also run into issues in regards to ADA accessibility. You know, the -- we want to build something that stands the test of time, that doesn't have to be replaced every 15, 20 years as costs for construction only continue to go up. So, if we're going to make an investment, which I think is critically important that we do it, we have to follow the Code, number one. And number two, I think we need to consider maybe using alternative materials that maybe mimic, maybe mimic the original structure, but that will stand the test of time, especially the wear and tear of the golf course. You know, the golfers who are very, very respectful of the course, but again, when you have so many people using a facility, there's wear and tear. It happens everywhere you go. So, Fred, I would like for you to talk a little bit about the meetings that we've had, and I'd like to see if we can get a little further guidance from the Commission so we can get this project moving forward, or at a minimum, just start including it in this year's budget. Okay?

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: If we can put up the PowerPoint.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, by the way. And ahead of time, thank you so much for your hard work along with Mr. Alexander and all the members who are here from the Granada Golf Course. I've spoken to many of you over the last two weeks, dozens and dozens of you. You've been active. You've been having conversations. A lot of you have been speaking with my brother-in-law, Victor. So, they were asking for something to be done, and he sent me the message loud and clear. So, yes, sir.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Thank you. So, if we can put up the PowerPoint. We wanted to just give you kind of a status update of where we've been, how we are -- how we got to where we are today and then show you all the possibilities and all the things that we went through to look at what the prospective next steps would be. So, the original scope that we were looking at doing for the improvements is we were looking at the demolition of the remaining shelters with the intent to preserve one of the existing shelters as a decorative structure in an appropriate location and then a proposal of six new shelters to replace the original nine wood structures. We wanted to improve ADA access to allow for the golf carts to drive into it and park underneath. We also were going to put in chill and drinking fountains in four of the new shelters, and we're going to do landscape improvements and also have cart extensions, which would be paved paths that would get to each shelter. So, what we did is we worked with an initial designer, it was AECOM, and they came up with a bunch of different designs, which I'll show you a little bit further along in our presentation. And then working with the City architect and City staff, there was a design that was looked at as the one to move forward with and then we brought in Gurri Matute to be the architect of the project and we looked at what can be done. Unfortunately, as I already mentioned, due to the ADA and we also had building code, replacing those shelters with the same wood-like structures was not something that we wanted to pursue at the time. You couldn't use those same

materials, and the same size wouldn't allow you to have a cart go under. In August of 2020, the Historic Preservation Board, they held a public meeting to review the application for the new shelters. The Board made a motion to approve the design and to recommend preserving one of the existing wooden rain shelters. Then we held a community public meeting on February 18th, 2021. I don't know if any of you were there. It was a spirited meeting. We got quite a bit of input from the community. It was not a positive amount of input. We got a lot of negative input. They did not like the design, and the consensus that was built in from the community at that time was to hold off. They wanted us to work on finishing the Pro Shop, finishing the Burger Bob's restoration, and come back to it. Many of them came to me and said, what's the rush? Get this stuff done and then we'll come back. At that point, we had internal meetings, City Manager at the time decided to place the project on hold and work towards completing the Pro Shop projects, which we now have. So, everything is built there, and everything is moving ahead and going well. So, I wanted to show what some of the designs were. These were eight designs were created by AECOM. This first one was a hexagonal design that would kind of mirror the shape of what was there before. Unfortunately, what you'll see is it's a much bigger footprint. When you have to put something, have the cart go under and have ADA access, you're going to have a bigger footprint. And it was going to be -- for that bigger footprint, there's higher elevation to make that structurally sound. So, here's one. Another one that they looked at was a rectangular design with a cylindrical roof that was a more high-profile roof that had a lot more height to it. It was a smaller footprint than the hexagonal one because it was narrow. And then another option was the same kind of rectangle design but to have a much more lower profile roof that was more curved and not as pronounced cylindrical. Then we went to some square designs. This one showed a lot more architectural features that looked a lot more like a structure. This was probably the least popular of the ones when we met. So -- and it is -- it looks like a lot, and it felt like a lot when you were looking at it. Then this was the one that was kind of out of the box. It's a slanted roof design. It was a triangle, very striking, low columns, also not a popular one when we -- when we moved forward. Then there was -- this one was one of the ones that was looked at. It's a rectangular design. It was a flat roof. It had the natural columns where you were going to have the ivy that was going to grow on it. So, this one was definitely a contender that we were looking at. Then we had the square design, but with a pointed roof, which would give it a very high elevation. And it wasn't exactly what they were looking at for when you're walking around the course, to have these big points all along the course. Then this was the design that we ended up landing on, which was a flat roof. It had more of a minimalist column. If you looked, there was one limestone column, then you had a pole. Kind of had the least structure around it, a lot more see-through, had a little bench on the -- on one side. And then they wanted to make the surfacing more of a kidney design that was not just a square. So, this was the one that was decided upon. This is what we're replacing, which is our existing conditions. And this is where we are with it. You know, the existing conditions of it, it's, you know -- it was determined it's a non-contributing structure built after the period of significance. It's exceeded its useful life. It's a 99 square foot, which is much smaller than the ones that were presented because it's an 11 by 11 dimension. And as I said, we were going to replace all six and have an ADA-compliant design. This was the basis of the design, as I talked about. And it was developed, and that's what it looks like. As they started looking at design, they

looked at comparison. That's what -- that was the concept rendering. As you can see, you know, there is a lot of see-through, which was, that was a good part for the community. You want to be able to see all the way through it. Flat roof, low profile, it's not much higher than what you have there now. So, those are some of the strengths of it, but there was opposition to the design and the look and the feel. They felt it was too modern; felt it just didn't meet the look of what it -- what it -- what's already there. And that's just a comparison, you can tell. You have an 11 by 11 and then you're looking over where it's like 13 by 26. So, it's a lot bigger of a floor plan. This is just another look at it from the top. I won't go too far into the materials, but we're going to use oolitic limestone. Those were the paint colors. That was the soft finish that we were going to have, that was the drinking fountain. So, we showed all this to the community. And that was the locations of all the shelters, plus where the water fountains would be. And that's where we are. Now we need to know what direction we want to go. I know there's been discussion on should we look at just keeping that same size, that same footprint and somehow working that, but that would mean that the golf carts can't drive under it. That's something that we have to look at.

Mayor Lago: So, Fred, first off, I want to thank you for the multiple meetings, for meeting with all the residents. I'm not a golfer. You know, I've never golfed at Granada, but I understand the importance after speaking to a lot of the residents for many, many years and the need. So, I understand what's going on right now. I personally would like to see -- we've made this effort already. I've spoken to a few homeowners; some homeowners are in favor of the design; some homeowners are not in favor of the design. I've spoken to a lot of the residents who are golfers, they told me they want something to be done. What I'd like to see, and with the support of the Commission, I'd like for you to bring back -- I know we're not going to be able to do it at this next Commission. I'd like for you to bring back, potentially through the Manager's Office, a design that mimics what we have there, but meets ADA code. I'm not looking for something with so much embellishment that doesn't fit into the neighborhood. While I like the -- by the way, I like the contemporary design, I think it's very nice, but I just don't know if it fits in in this neighborhood. I think it's actually a beautiful design, you know. And some of them are also very nice designs, but I think that they just don't really fit into what we're looking for. I'd like to see, if possible, that we mimic the existing structures, bring them up to code, and get an idea of what products they would use...

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Okay.

Mayor Lago: So that they can withstand the time. I also think that we need to potentially add a wall to the back of it of some sort so that we can have -- a very small wall, maybe a knee wall where we can put a water fountain that can be -- can be protected. Something that gives it a little bit of sturdiness, maybe an area where people can clean their cleats, you know, that's attached to the wall. You know, maybe so you have the structure and then you have maybe behind that little wall or adjacent to a little wall. I'll leave that up to the designer.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: That's just an idea that I have. I think that a water fountain is necessary out there. And if you put a water fountain freestanding, I think it's exposed to the elements. I don't think it has any rigidity, structure to it, and it could be a problem, a maintenance issue for years to come. So, I'd like for my colleagues to see if they're interested in getting behind this and see that in the near future, we come back with a design that, again, takes into consideration the residents' request, and we move forward to deliver on something that, again, has to be done. It's been in dire need and right now what's there is a serious eyesore. And I think in my opinion it's -- we've got to replace it in one form or another. And what I don't want to see is that we lose one of them and they slowly start, you know, basically disappearing because...

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Right.

Mayor Lago: They fall apart or who knows what happens. And then we don't have any shelters at all. And then we start hearing the complaints, you know.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Sure.

Mayor Lago: There's no shelters, there's no shelters, and we can't run to replace a shelter. It takes time to design, and it takes time to build them, and it takes time to actually install them. So, that's just my idea. You know, I'd like to see if the Commission is willing to get some buyback and get Fred, through the Manager's Office, to put together a design that mimics what we have existing, considering ADA considerations.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes, ma'am.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Part of my career, I've done a lot of ADA remediation work in historic buildings as well as, you know, buildings that were down in the Keys. And you know, you have to respect the past and yet allow for accessibility for an individual in a wheelchair. And I do believe there is a way to do it and have the structure, you might need to go a little wider, so you have that 60-inch radius inside, sufficient enough so if someone's sitting down on a bench that you're not hitting them in the knees, but also to allow an area for the cart to pull up and have like an entrance feature. I think it's something we can sit down, you know, with the community and play, you know, with a pencil and sketch out a general design, and then provide those ideas to someone who is an architect that can bring it to fruition, so that both pieces be able to have the accessibility feature as well as, you know, the historic replica, basically, you were talking about, can be done. There's a lot of wood structures down in the Keys that have been standing since the 1800s. And the craftsmen who built them were amazing. You had wood joints that were like, you know, one -- you fit one into the other because these people built boats. And if those structures could withstand the test of time for all the hurricanes that the Keys have had, I think we can design

a rain shelter here that can withstand the test of time that's made out of good quality wood, that's treated and will last for a long, long time in the future. So, I'd be happy to support this and move it forward, but I'd like to also hear the comments of my colleagues.

Commissioner Castro: Yeah, through the Mayor, I really like this idea. The last one that you proposed, I'm not a fan of. It's a little too modern for me. Now the first one you did present, it had like a cylinder, circular, I don't know, can you put it back on the screen?

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah, it was the hexagonal one. It kind of mimics the same shape. If we can put the presentation back on.

Commissioner Castro: Okay. What was wrong with this one? It didn't get support?

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah, it -- well, because of the shape and the scale, it was pretty big. And it was a high, high elevation. I think one of the things that they liked of that design was that it was eight -- eight feet six, which is what we had there now. The other design, as you'll see, it's much...

Commissioner Castro: So, the circular and that -- it looks a little more like the original ones that are there.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: It does, it does.

Commissioner Castro: And it's...

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: This one, right?

Commissioner Castro: It's more cozy. It's not -- it's not so modernistic for that area.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: No, it is. I think -- you know, I think what has been discussed here, I think what you've changed from this is you wouldn't have that decorative columns of the stone. You maybe look at something that's a little bit more minimal that mirrors what's there now, which is just white -- you know, a painted white structure. So, you can look at that. But as you can see, you know, it's not exactly to scale, but it was pretty high, and it cut a pretty big -- a big look as you're passing by because -- and you had that little -- that little space in the top too. You might be able to get rid of that and make it lower.

Commissioner Castro: Yeah, is there any necessity to why it was so high?

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Well, it was just to have the size and according to the -- you know, the Code, to build what needed to be the structure. I mean, that was what the architects worked on.

Commissioner Castro: Was it more of a design issue?

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: There was a lot of discussion. I think it was a combination of both. I mean, I think the big issues that we were fighting with there was having it big enough for the cart to go through, the ADA, and the materials because, you know, some people just wanted to continue with the wood. And what we got from the reviews from the architect -- City architect at the time, the Board of Architects, was we couldn't do that. So, these were -- of these designs, the one that I showed you, that was the one that was selected. So, then the architects went and then actually put a plan for that -- only that one. So, I don't know exactly how exact it would have been in terms of the high profile and everything, but according to the design, this was going to be higher because you needed more space on the hexagon, and it would just go up.

Commissioner Castro: I would like for us to keep on working with the same architect, not to lose any of the investment we've already made and maybe come up with an option that's something similar to this and bring it back to the community.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Sure.

Commissioner Fernandez: I agree. I remember these meetings. I remember the first conversation I had about these shelters was with Dr. Andy Gomez. And we were pushing, I guess, four city managers ago to pursue some federal grants that were available that would have covered the full cost of them at the time. Obviously, that never happened. But I don't want to see us continuing to drag this on. I would like to see this come to a resolution as quickly as possible. The condition of the shelters is not good, and the construction is not going to take two days to get it completed. Now there's a permitting and a design, so I agree I think this hexagonal design, which is similar to what is there now, might be our best option. I think part of the design of this, that extra portion on top was also for ventilation, if I remember correctly. That was part of the discussion at the time, because it allows the air to circulate on the top of the -- of the -- of the roof.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: That's correct.

Commissioner Fernandez: But we may not need to be as tall, and potentially we don't need to be as wide. I mean, if you look at the design, the proportion of that golf cart, you can almost put two of those golf carts, one on top of the other, and get them through there. So, we may not need to be as tall. Obviously, then we have an issue with proportion, it kind of looks like it got pushed down.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah.

Commissioner Fernandez: But I'm sure that the architects can design something that mimics what we have there now and still accomplishes what we need to do in a timely manner. I don't want this to be six months down the road and we're still looking at potential designs.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Gotcha.

Commissioner Fernandez: How quickly do you think we'd be able to get back to the community with a potential community meeting to go over a new design?

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: So, we would -- we would look at getting the same architect that we had on the project at the end. And then it would be on their timetable. I don't know what their timetable would be, but as soon as we got a design back, the community meeting part we can get done pretty quickly. I just don't know. I don't want to speak for the architects, see how long it would take them. But if we're -- we're having this clear direction, I don't think it take -- it would take that long. I would be able to give you guys an update once I talk to them.

Commissioner Fernandez: Right, because then we come into the summer season. We don't like doing community meetings in the summer because folks are traveling. So, I would like to see if we can maybe get something before the community prior to summer.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: I think so.

Mayor Lago: Why don't we -- why don't we go back and you can come to the next Commission meeting with a schedule through the Manager's Office so you can talk to the architect, talk to anybody you need to, you know...

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: Any consultants or anybody who's going to be providing guidance on this front and then we can see what the schedule is and then we'll figure it out.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Absolutely.

Commissioner Menendez: If I may, through the Mayor, can you show, Fred, the photo, the last one that was flat roof, the one that...?

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: The one that was selected?

Commissioner Menendez: Yeah. That one, right?

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Menendez: And just to put things in historical perspective, that's very reminiscent of a structure you would be very familiar with. Mr. City Clerk, do you have the image?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah. I know what you're going to show.

Commissioner Menendez: I know you know. So does Carolina.

City Clerk Urquia: If Cable TV could put up my screen.

Commissioner Menendez: That's the Coral Gables Youth Center, 1950s, 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. Same concept. Open air, you could see through from one side to the other. The breeze went through, same columns, same flat roof. I know there's a concern that it's a modern look, but this look goes back to the 1950s in Coral Gables and those were coral columns. So, I just want to put things -- throw that historical perspective so when there's a conversation, discussion, there's a historical side to that design. At the end of the day, what the community wants is what we'll go with, but I just wanted to add that that's one of those iconic buildings that we had built in the 50s. So, that look has been around for a while.

Mayor Lago: So, Mr. Director, what I'll do is I'll put this item on the next agenda. Mr. Clerk, if possible, would you please work with the Manager to put together a schedule so that we can -- we can have a conversation at the next meeting to understand better, you know, what happens over the next few months.

Community Recreation Director Couceyro: Yep.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. You have any public comments, sir?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, Mr. Mayor, I do.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: Speaker Paul Susz.

Paul Susz: Good morning, everyone.

Mayor Lago: Good morning, sir.

Mr. Susz: I'm a resident of Coral Gables for many years, also on the Insurance and Risk Management Board. I'm here for two purposes. I'm an avid golfer, also a fan of the City, and on the Insurance Risk Board. You have a major risk, not having structures when you're having lightning in the area. Those current structures that you had were grounded, so it was -- at least served the purpose. And now when I keep hearing about this, it keeps going on and on and on. The course was renovated over 10 years ago. At the grand opening, Commissioner Pat Keon, who

teed off the first ball, she mentioned that there was money in the budget at that time to repair the existing gazebos. That's what we call those, all the golfers there. The fact that you can't have a golf cart in the shelter/gazebo doesn't -- is not a concern of any of the golfers around that I've talked with and that I know. Our main concern, not only for the golfers, but for the pedestrians, the runners, the bikers who are going through the area when it's raining and thundering, is you have shelter. You go in, if you have a golf cart, you can leave the golf cart outside of the structure. It doesn't matter if it gets wet. Our only concern is that we're inside and not about to get hit by lightning. So, that's one of the main items that I had. I also wanted to mention, you know, in 2018 I saw one of the slides, AECOM was involved trying to make a new structure. It's now seven years and we still haven't had anything. And it's been over 10 years since the former Commissioner had mentioned we have money in the budget, and it will get done. Unfortunately, what happens is I'm seeing in most cities and governments, you have this budget, and if the money doesn't get spent that year, you no longer have the money to do that project. The project could have been done very simple. The concerns about ADA are very valid. I agree with that. But it doesn't seem that it would be a major problem to just make a bigger opening for the wheelchairs to come in. Currently you have one existing structure, maybe two, that's not ADA compliant. So, you are facing a risk of somebody bringing a case against the City for a non-ADA compliant item. So, at this point, I would think that the City really has to start moving before the rainy season starts and more of a potential of a risk develops that we get a plan, just make it simple, and get these structures built. I mean, the last structure that I heard about was going to cost over \$110,000 to put in. Geez, we don't need that. Some two by fours? And the other concern, well, we need to use, and I don't mind using ecological, like recycled wood or rubber, things of that sort. But the existing structure has lasted, according to that document, from the 20s to the 30s. That's 90 to 100 years it's been up there. So, please, let's get this done, and if we could really move this along, I think you'd have a lot of happy people. Thank you all.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.

City Clerk Urquia: Patrick Alexander.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Alexander, good morning.

Commissioner Fernandez: And Mr. Manager, next meeting when this comes back up, if we could have the Finance Director let us know if there's still funding available or that was set aside for this project that may still be there.

Mayor Lago: Sir?

Patrick Alexander: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen of the Commission, Mr. Mayor, Lady Vice Mayor. My name is Patrick Alexander. I'm the author of Coral Gables: The First Hundred Years. I also wrote an article in the January Coral Gables Magazine called "The Village Green," in which I concluded that the Granada Golf Course represents not only the heart but the soul of

Coral Gables. I've lived within two minutes' walk of the Granada golf course for 40 years. Nearly every day during those 40 years I've either played golf on the course, ridden my bike around the course, walked my dog across the course, I know that's illegal but, in the twilight, or stroll with my wife and grandkids alongside the course. Forty years ago, when I was playing golf or riding my bike, if I was caught in a sudden rainstorm, I could quickly find protection in one of Granada's nine gazebos. Those shelters were dotted around the course accessible to everybody, not just golfers, but walkers caught in the rain on North or South Greenway Drive. Each shelter could comfortably seat 14 people, and the entrances were wide enough for any wheelchair. Not only did they supply protection from the rain, they also provided protection from lightning strikes, since each one is equipped with a lightning conductor. The shelters were built during the 1940s, which means they're the same age as me. And like me, they're showing signs of age. But unlike me, I receive loving care from my wife, my doctors, and I've got two new hips to show for it. The shelters have been abandoned or destroyed. So, during the South Florida thunderstorms, local residents as well as golfers and joggers are forced to take shelter beneath the trees, which I believe we all know is one of the most dangerous things you can do during a lightning strike. A few years ago, as we've heard, the City approved a budget to reconstruct the rain -- the gazebos. However, for whatever reason, they decided to completely redesign them from scratch. And the proposed designs, as we've seen this morning, are not only extremely expensive and ugly, but they were totally inappropriate for a golf course. And they were designed by a man who had never played golf in his life. What's that flaggy thing over there on the flat bit of lawn? I remember him asking when he was given a tour of the golf course. Now, as far as I know, and correct me if I'm wrong here, but I do not understand why we need to have golf carts going into the rain shelters. Nobody who plays golf believes that. And unless it's a federal law, I don't see why it needs to even be mentioned. So, the reason I'm here today is to argue that we do not need a new design. The original design is excellent. These shelters have lasted nearly 80 years and have withstood all of the many hurricanes, including Andrew. Aesthetically, the model is simple and basic, but very, very elegant. From the outside, the design is discreet and rustic, blends well with the rest of the golf course, which was originally designed in 1922. And sitting inside, as the Vice Mayor alluded to, just looking at the way it's been constructed, the carpentry, the beam work, it gives a great deal of pleasure. Simple, elegant and pleasing. Now I don't like to use the word cheap when we're in Coral Gables, but rebuilding the original design instead of creating a new one would be cost effective. The design has proved itself for 80 years. There's no need to reinvent the wheel. We already have a winning solution for our problems, so let's use it. Finally, if I may, so I have gone over the time, but I would like to remind the Commission that exactly 100 years ago in March 1925, George Merrick broke ground to build the Biltmore Hotel, which celebrated, and he celebrated -- that was in March 1925, and had the grand opening with celebrities from all over the world in January 1926, 10 months later. Yes, Merrick constructed the Biltmore Hotel in just 10 months. So, in a rather charming way to commemorate his achievement and to celebrate our City's centennial year, could the Commission take a 5-0 vote, unanimous vote, in favor of fast-tracking the full restoration of the nine original Granada rain shelters, speeding up the zoning, licensing and permitting processes so the project could be completed before the end of the year. And if we could achieve that, then I'm sure on behalf of all the residents we would be delighted to see a brass

plaque in each of the shelters commemorating the names of the five centennial Commissioners who made it all happen. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much, sir. Thank you so much.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor...

Vice Mayor Anderson: Wonderful idea.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor...

Mayor Lago: Go ahead.

Commissioner Castro: Oh, I'm hearing -- okay, that's you talking. I would like to see a design similar to what he's saying, to the one that is one of the options that we can explore. Let's make it ADA compliant and make sure that lightning -- it's protected from lightning as well. I think it's a good option.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, will you provide the Commissioner with the meeting minutes? That's exactly what I asked for 10 minutes ago. The next person that we're requesting.

City Clerk Urquia: I have one more speaker, Mr. Mayor. Karelia Carbonell.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. Karelia, you're on the line?

Commissioner Fernandez: How disrespectful.

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Carbonell, good morning. She's unmuted.

Mayor Lago: A few seconds.

Commissioner Menendez: We hear on the computer, on our laptops.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Carbonell?

Commissioner Fernandez: I think she's coming through on Zoom, but she's not coming in through here.

City Clerk Urquia: No, she's not coming out on Zoom. I don't...

Commissioner Fernandez: It's on -- it's on here.

Commissioner Menendez: You can hear her here.

Mayor Lago: So, we've given her about a minute, 30 seconds.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay, now she's muted again. Give me a second.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: Ma'am, go ahead.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Carbonell?

City Clerk Urquia: She's on the computer. She's on the computer, but she's not coming up.

Commissioner Fernandez: Put the microphone to your speaker.

City Clerk Urquia: I don't have my computer joined on on Zoom.

Mayor Lago: So, we can't hear Ms. Carbonell. Mr. Manager...

Karelia Carbonell: Hi. I've been on mute.

Mayor Lago: Here we go. You're on.

Ms. Carbonell: Can you --? Okay. Can everyone hear me now?

Mayor Lago: Yes, ma'am.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes, we can.

Ms. Carbonell: Thank you. Thank you. Well, on behalf of the Historic Preservation Association, we fully support Item F-1 with the condition of, obviously, the restoration of the rain shelters. And for 80 years, golfers on the Granada Golf Course have taken refuge in several of the 1940s wooden rain shelters scattered along the historic green. However, in August of 2020, the Historic Preservation Board passed a motion to recommend that only one of the existing 1940 wooden rain shelters be renovated. That is a good gesture. Obviously, back in 2020, we all decided that it's better to have one preserved than all of them removed. But the City should consider, and just like Mr. Alexander so eloquently made a point of, is to repurpose -- repurpose our shelters. We talk a lot about sustainability. We talk a lot about environmental issues. We should repurpose these shelters, not just one of the existing ones. Now neighbors obviously rejected all the designs that were presented at the time. And I want to mention, and really, I think -- and I was part of that meeting. There was a lot of nostalgia that was, you know, evoked, you know, in those comments.

And according to a study, conducted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, American towns that make historic preservation a priority enjoy an economic dividend to the local economy. As per the study, not only do places matter emotionally, but economically as well, through the nostalgia effect. Brooklyn, the -- in Brooklyn, New York, Prospect Park understood this economic value and restored its similar historic shelters recently. Why not Coral Gables? So, in ending my comment, I want to thank author and historian Patrick Alexander. He is a great advocate for preserving, saving, and restoring the 1940s rain shelters. And HPACG joins him in advocating for the rain shelters to be preserved. We ask that they be restored and maintained for present and future generations and to honor our past. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, Karelia. Mr. Manager, as requested for the next meeting, can we put together a schedule, taking into account, like I mentioned, my colleagues mentioned also, same design, same concept, following ADD -- ADA, excuse me, following ADA, understanding that you want to try to use as many local products, you know, but obviously, adding a little bit of modernness to the products that we use so that they stand the test of time. I've been by those rain shelters, okay. We're going to take away more wood to add more wood at the end of the day, so it's not going to be the same -- it's not going to be the same actual shelter. That's similar -- like we have the problem with the windows in City Hall. So, I just would like to see same design considering ADA, and I'd like to see a schedule if we can meet the goals so we can finally address this issue and hopefully include it in the budget for this year, okay? Because I know it's going to take some time to take it to market and get some pricing and installation and all that kind of stuff, okay? So, I look forward to it being the next meeting. Thank you, sir. I appreciate it.