

1 visit specifically related to the case before  
 2 the Board, the Board Member must also disclose  
 3 such visit. In either case, the Board Member  
 4 must state, on the record, whether the ex parte  
 5 communication and/or site visit will affect the  
 6 Board Member's ability to impartially consider  
 7 the evidence to be presented regarding the  
 8 matter. The Board Member should also state  
 9 that his or her decision will be based on  
 10 substantial competent evidence and testimony  
 11 presented on the record today.  
 12 Does any Board -- does any Member of the  
 13 Board have such a communication and/or site  
 14 visit to disclose at this time?  
 15 MR. BEHAR: No.  
 16 MR. REVUELTA: No.  
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: No? Thank you.  
 18 Swearing In, everyone who speaks this  
 19 evening must complete the roster on the podium.  
 20 We ask that you print clearly, so the official  
 21 records of your name and address will be  
 22 correct.  
 23 Now, with the exception of attorneys, all  
 24 persons physically in the City Commission  
 25 Chambers, who will speak on agenda items before

1 THE SECRETARY; Claudia Miro?  
 2 MS. MIRO: Yes.  
 3 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?  
 4 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.  
 5 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?  
 6 MR. TORRE: Yes.  
 7 THE SECRETARY: Chip Withers?  
 8 MR. WITHERS: Yes.  
 9 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?  
 10 MR. BEHAR: Yes.  
 11 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?  
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.  
 13 The procedure that we will use for tonight,  
 14 first we'll have the identification of the  
 15 agenda item by Mr. Coller, then we'll have the  
 16 presentation by the applicant or agent, and  
 17 presentation by Staff. In this case, it will  
 18 be the Staff. Then we'll go ahead and open it  
 19 for public comment, first in Chamber, then the  
 20 Zoom platform, and then the phone line  
 21 platform. Afterwards, I'll go ahead and close  
 22 for public comment. We'll have Board  
 23 discussion, a motion, discussion, and second of  
 24 motion, if appropriate, Board's final comments  
 25 and a vote.

1 us this evening, please rise to be sworn in.  
 2 (Thereupon, the participants were sworn.)  
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Zoom platform  
 4 participants, I will ask any person wishing to  
 5 speak on tonight's agenda item to please open  
 6 your chat and send a direct message to Jill  
 7 Menendez, stating that you would like to speak  
 8 before the Board and include your full name.  
 9 Jill will call you when it's your turn. I ask  
 10 you to be concise, for the interest of time.  
 11 Phone platform participants, after the Zoom  
 12 platform participants are done, I will ask  
 13 phone participants to comment on tonight's  
 14 agenda item. I also ask you to be concise, for  
 15 the interest of time.  
 16 We have the approval of the minutes of  
 17 October 12, 2022. Has everybody had a chance  
 18 to review those?  
 19 MR. BEHAR: Yes. I make a motion for  
 20 approval.  
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a motion for  
 22 approval.  
 23 MS. MIRO: Second.  
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any comments? No?  
 25 Call the roll, please.

1 Mr. Coller, if you'd please read the first  
 2 item into the record.  
 3 MR. COLLER: Item F-1, an Ordinance of the  
 4 City Commission amending the City of Coral  
 5 Gables Zoning Code, Article 6 "Landscape,"  
 6 Section 6-104 "Landscape Requirements for  
 7 Public Rights-of-Way; to amend planting height  
 8 and various other provisions, providing for a  
 9 repeater provision, severability clause,  
 10 codification, and providing for an effective  
 11 date.  
 12 Item F-1, public hearing.  
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.  
 14 MS. CABRERA: Good evening. Suramy  
 15 Cabrera, Development Services Director.  
 16 You actually saw this item, I believe, one  
 17 or two meetings ago. It went back to the  
 18 Landscape Beautification Committee --  
 19 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: -- Advisory Board.  
 20 MS. CABRERA: -- Advisory Board. They  
 21 voted in favor of it. There was a lot of  
 22 discussion, but they voted in favor of it.  
 23 We're brining it back in front of you today.  
 24 I just want to clarify that, I know there  
 25 was a lot of discussion the last time that you

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1 saw this item, but what this item does is, it  
 2 only allows the minimum height requirements to  
 3 be reduced, so that you don't have to have  
 4 fifteen or sixteen feet as the minimum height  
 5 for trees, which the Code now requires. So  
 6 we're bringing that down, so that it's easier  
 7 to get trees from the nurseries. That's the  
 8 extent of that modification to the Zoning Code.  
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.  
 10 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Hi, and I'm Deena  
 11 Bell, from Green Space Management, Assistant  
 12 Public Works Director, if there are any  
 13 questions.  
 14 MS. MIRO: I want to know what happened.  
 15 What changed from the last time that this item  
 16 came to now? So what are the differences? Are  
 17 there any differences? Did anything change or  
 18 are we seeing the exact same item?  
 19 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: I believe it's the  
 20 exact same item. The request from the Board  
 21 was that we take it to the Landscape  
 22 Beautification Advisory Board --  
 23 MS. MIRO: Right.  
 24 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: -- and get them to  
 25 weigh in, which we did, and now we're back to

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1 tree. Then, all of a sudden, someone plants  
 2 four palm trees between those Oak trees, you  
 3 don't think that's going to affect the visual  
 4 perception of that street?  
 5 MS. CABRERA: So --  
 6 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: I have some images.  
 7 Do you want me to show them?  
 8 MS. CABRERA: Yeah.  
 9 MR. WITHERS: No, you don't need images.  
 10 I'm just asking you your opinion.  
 11 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Yeah. Absolutely.  
 12 MR. WITHERS: I mean, I understand there's  
 13 an Ordinance on the books, which I totally  
 14 disagree with, and I disagree with not -- don't  
 15 take it personally, but -- I mean, I -- since  
 16 we had this item, I, visually, in my mind,  
 17 every street I went down, driving throughout  
 18 the City, and I drive Granada, I drive Riviera,  
 19 I drive Hardee, I drive all of the streets, and  
 20 I'm visualizing what planting between these  
 21 majestic trees will be in the right-of-way.  
 22 MS. CABRERA: Right, and I think Deena does  
 23 have some images, but it doesn't change the  
 24 process to plant something in the right-of-way.  
 25 So it would still be reviewed by Staff, the

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1 you with the same item. The Landscape  
 2 Beautification Advisory Board, as Ms. Cabrera  
 3 said, had no opposition to it as written.  
 4 MS. MIRO: About our concerns that we  
 5 raised last time, were any of those addressed  
 6 in the discussions with the Landscape Advisory  
 7 Board? I think we were talking about losing  
 8 the canopy and all of that, if I remember  
 9 correctly. I don't know if there was --  
 10 MS. CABRERA: Well, there was a lot of  
 11 discussion on how does this change the look of  
 12 the streets and the trees, and, you know, did  
 13 we have -- but this doesn't really change that.  
 14 The City has, and Deena could go into it  
 15 further, a Tree Succession Plan, which has been  
 16 in place for years -- it has nothing to do with  
 17 what's in front of you today -- that does allow  
 18 the City to not have to, for example, only  
 19 plant Oaks or Mahogany, which are what is  
 20 typically readily available at the sixteen  
 21 feet, but this doesn't really change that Tree  
 22 Succession Plan.  
 23 MR. WITHERS: I don't see how it can't  
 24 change the landscape vistas of our streets. If  
 25 you have a street with Oak tree, Oak tree, Oak

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1 same Staff that's always been reviewing it --  
 2 MR. WITHERS: I understand.  
 3 MS. CABRERA: -- and they still get the  
 4 input of the property owner in front of it. So  
 5 if it's not appropriate, then it would not be  
 6 approved.  
 7 MR. WITHERS: Well, I know, but appropriate  
 8 by who?  
 9 MS. CABRERA: Now -- that's what I was  
 10 going to say. Now, there is the conversation  
 11 of whether Mr. Merrick, George Merrick, had  
 12 this idea that one street should only have a  
 13 certain type of tree, but that was abandoned by  
 14 the City years ago. That idea of the street  
 15 landscaping in the right-of-way was abandoned  
 16 years ago.  
 17 MR. WITHERS: Years ago meaning when?  
 18 MS. CABRERA: How long has that Tree  
 19 Succession Plan been in place?  
 20 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: The Tree Succession  
 21 Plan that's the document -- I believe you have  
 22 copies of it in your packet, right -- I think  
 23 it was written in 2014, and basically there was  
 24 a consultant landscape architecture firm hired.  
 25 They did an assessment of all of the tree

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1 species in Coral Gables, and they basically put  
 2 a document together that said, street tree  
 3 species are already diverse and mixed  
 4 throughout Coral Gables, just by the natural  
 5 evolution of the City.  
 6 It's very difficult, driving around, to  
 7 find streets that are only one species of tree  
 8 today. Our practice, in Green Space  
 9 Management, when we're going through swales and  
 10 removing trees and deciding what species to  
 11 come back to plant again, we naturally look at  
 12 the specific location and find the right tree  
 13 for that location, and we also get the  
 14 residents' weigh-in.  
 15 So, today, this does not change our  
 16 practice. We currently plant different tree  
 17 species on streets, and have always been, since  
 18 I've been here working at the City.  
 19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So, is it fair to say,  
 20 as you had said before, that you're coming here  
 21 just to lower the height of the required tree,  
 22 nothing more?  
 23 MS. CABRERA: That's correct.  
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Nothing more is  
 25 changing?

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1 see different species that would work for that  
 2 location.  
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: But before there was a  
 4 requirement of fifteen feet, was the --  
 5 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Right now, it says --  
 6 MS. CABRERA: Fifteen or sixteen.  
 7 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: -- sixteen feet, and  
 8 so it's very difficult to approve a  
 9 development, when they're not allowed to put  
 10 trees in that are fourteen feet, 'cause that's  
 11 all they found available in the nursery.  
 12 MR. BEHAR: Deena, I think I will be okay  
 13 with that, but what I don't want to do is not  
 14 put any minimum and then they come in with, you  
 15 know, an eight-foot tree, and it may not affect  
 16 the visibility triangle, may not affect any of  
 17 that.  
 18 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Right.  
 19 MR. BEHAR: And from the development point  
 20 of view, you know, yes, we want to see  
 21 something that is compatible and something  
 22 different and it doesn't always have to be Oaks  
 23 or Mahoganies. You know, it could be many  
 24 multiple, you know, different tree species that  
 25 are beautiful. And, then, you're right, it's

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1 MS. CABRERA: Right.  
 2 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: No.  
 3 MR. BEHAR: And are we putting a minimum,  
 4 because, I mean, I don't like to see somebody  
 5 come in with a six-foot tree?  
 6 MS. CABRERA: What is it -- is it a  
 7 twelve-foot minimum or --  
 8 MR. BEHAR: If we have a minimum, you know,  
 9 and we know what that is, I think I would be  
 10 more comfortable, because --  
 11 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Well, just the bottom  
 12 line issue is, when applicants are coming with  
 13 new homes or projects or the plan reviewers are  
 14 approving street tree planting plans, it's very  
 15 difficult sometimes to get good interesting  
 16 trees fifteen, sixteen feet and above.  
 17 So, all of the time, the developers want,  
 18 "Well, I found these beautiful Satin Leaf  
 19 trees. They're only ten feet tall." And as  
 20 long as they meet the visibility triangle  
 21 requirements, which is creating a window of  
 22 visibility between thirty inches high and eight  
 23 feet, and as long as the branching is more than  
 24 seven feet above the sidewalk or above the  
 25 road, we always allow it, because we want to

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1 hard to get them sixteen footers from the  
 2 get-go, but what we don't want to do is, you  
 3 know -- and you know how it is, if you allow  
 4 something, then it's going to be difficult, you  
 5 know, if they come in with a six-foot tree, to  
 6 say, "Well, you can't do that."  
 7 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Well, you know, we  
 8 have professional landscape architects and  
 9 arborists that are reviewing all of the  
 10 landscape plans. We have a review process,  
 11 just to make sure that doesn't happen, and  
 12 that's our current --  
 13 MR. BEHAR: But if you don't give me a  
 14 minimum, I will challenge that, because if you  
 15 don't give me a minimum, you cannot force me to  
 16 do something. So I agree with what you're  
 17 doing, you know, lowering, you know, the  
 18 minimum of sixteen feet, but I think we should  
 19 establish a minimum that is, you know --  
 20 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Okay. The definition  
 21 of tree in the Zoning Code now is ten to twelve  
 22 feet tall, and for planting inside the  
 23 Residential properties, trees are defined as  
 24 that.  
 25 MR. BEHAR: Would you say that a

1 twelve-foot tree of any species is easily  
 2 accessible? I mean, maybe not sixteen --  
 3 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: It depends on the  
 4 species. It depends on the species.  
 5 MR. TORRE: I think that, the way I'm  
 6 reading this, this is for trees that are a  
 7 maximum of twenty-five feet, that you're trying  
 8 to use those trees. That's what it says in  
 9 this Ordinance, right? So you're trying to get  
 10 a tree that only grows to twenty-five, and  
 11 it's, maybe, when you find them at the nursery,  
 12 they're ten -- eight or ten. That's the  
 13 starting number. And those are the trees that  
 14 have to be bought for that particular brand to  
 15 succeed with.  
 16 So I don't know, different trees have  
 17 different starting points for that  
 18 particular --  
 19 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Uh-huh.  
 20 MR. BEHAR: One example is the Bridal  
 21 Veils.  
 22 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Uh-huh.  
 23 MR. BEHAR: You know, those, to me, I think  
 24 they're beautiful trees, but you cannot get  
 25 them mature.

1 know. And the visibility triangle, if you are  
 2 pulling out of a driveway, you're right, it has  
 3 to be between thirty inches and -- I don't  
 4 think eight feet. I think maybe that could be  
 5 lowered to like six-and-a-half feet.  
 6 You cannot have anything that is above  
 7 thirty --  
 8 MR. REVUELTA: That triangle, it cannot be  
 9 more than thirty.  
 10 MR. BEHAR: Right. But then you cannot --  
 11 if you have a shade tree, that, you know, you  
 12 have to have visibility, so the bottom of those  
 13 branches cannot be less than seven feet or  
 14 whatever.  
 15 MR. TORRE: I think it applies when you're  
 16 fixated on a particular tree, and then you say,  
 17 "Well, the only thing I can find are trees this  
 18 size, and that's what tree I want, and there's  
 19 nothing I can do about it," and you're sort of  
 20 stuck, if that's the tree you want, having to  
 21 get a small tree.  
 22 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Well, that happens  
 23 very often.  
 24 MR. TORRE: That's what I think is sort  
 25 of --

1 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Correct.  
 2 MR. BEHAR: I understand, but, you know, I  
 3 think there's a minimum that, you know, you  
 4 could find, that would be compatible with what  
 5 we're trying to do.  
 6 MR. TORRE: I mean, I get what you're  
 7 saying. You don't want to get something in a  
 8 seven gallon and then it has a little -- you  
 9 know, and then you say, "Okay, that meets the  
 10 criteria." So I understand what you're trying  
 11 to get to. Is there a way to curtail that?  
 12 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: You could probably --  
 13 I think the clear trunk clearance of a tree is  
 14 more important than the overall height, in the  
 15 urban area, because we're talking about  
 16 visibility and clearance over sidewalks and  
 17 roads, for the most part.  
 18 MR. TORRE: Is there like a minimum that  
 19 you could say, all trees of this sort of,  
 20 twenty-five max, could fall under, and say, "No  
 21 tree less than six-foot"? Is there a number  
 22 that you could kind of --  
 23 MR. BEHAR: I mean, the trunk -- if you  
 24 establish a minimum trunk height, you're going  
 25 to meet -- match whatever height that is, you

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Let me ask you a  
 2 question. Chip has a concern about mixing  
 3 trees within certain areas where it's already  
 4 established, but I want to be clear and  
 5 understand, that is not changing with this? In  
 6 other words, the establishment of keeping it  
 7 the way it was or the trees or the way we see  
 8 it, that will continue?  
 9 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Right now, since 2014,  
 10 the Tree Succession Plan encouraged diversity  
 11 of species. There are certain trees, and I  
 12 drove around for three hours the other day  
 13 taking pictures, trying to find streets that  
 14 had one species only. It's difficult.  
 15 You've got Coral Way's Live Oaks. You've  
 16 Columbus' Ficuses. Granada, you've got large  
 17 Black Olives.  
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Hardee.  
 19 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Hardee, you have Black  
 20 Olives. Anastasia, you have Coconut Palms.  
 21 Those are the only ones I can think of, that  
 22 are still today one species. All of the other  
 23 streets have already been mixed species  
 24 throughout the years.  
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Well, I know, when the

1 City went ahead and replaced trees that were  
 2 dying in the swale and so forth, they gave  
 3 property owners a choice of certain trees that  
 4 they wanted.  
 5 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Correct. That is our  
 6 practice.  
 7 MR. BEHAR: I'll give you an example, Santa  
 8 Maria, which is one of old streets, is Black  
 9 Olives, okay, and Black Olives are not great  
 10 trees, right? I mean, you could agree with me.  
 11 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Staining.  
 12 MR. BEHAR: You know, they really aren't.  
 13 You can't put your car there, because it will  
 14 be stained completely. Forget about the  
 15 driveway. I don't care so much about the  
 16 driveway, but, you know, the cars.  
 17 But, look, if you think this is the right  
 18 way to go, I guess -- you know, I will, you  
 19 know, support it. I still think that we should  
 20 have a minimum.  
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Chip, let me ask you a  
 22 question. I share your concern, but my  
 23 understanding is that this process has been  
 24 ongoing since 2014. I guess we didn't know  
 25 that.

1 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: There's some photos.  
 2 Okay, so do I have to flip this myself or does  
 3 -- okay.  
 4 Okay. So let me back up a little bit.  
 5 MR. WITHERS: Okay.  
 6 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: So just a few images  
 7 here. Look at this one, mixed species stopper  
 8 trees on the left side. You can see there  
 9 six --  
 10 MR. WITHERS: You lost me. Is that a  
 11 median there in the middle or what is that?  
 12 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: This is a Residential  
 13 street in North Coral Gables, just east of  
 14 Merrick House. On the right side, you can see  
 15 big mature Live Oaks in the swale. You can see  
 16 a lot of vegetation in the swale already from  
 17 the Merrick House. On the left side, you see a  
 18 swale that's been planted solid with warped  
 19 ferns at the bottom and small tree species,  
 20 called a Stopper. That was done by the  
 21 resident as part of the swale planting package.  
 22 So this kind of thing is already --  
 23 MR. WITHERS: And how long is that block,  
 24 one block long maybe?  
 25 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Uh-huh.

1 MR. WITHERS: I know. I agree with you.  
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: How do we --  
 3 MR. WITHERS: I know I'm going to say, no,  
 4 and I'm voting against; no, because I think the  
 5 Ordinance is a terrible Ordinance. That's just  
 6 how I feel, I mean, and I'm not challenging  
 7 you, but I suggest you drive down Riviera,  
 8 Granada. I can give you a list of fifteen or  
 9 twenty streets.  
 10 Now, grant it, it might break where there's  
 11 a major street, like the south side of Riviera  
 12 is different than the north side of Riviera, on  
 13 Hardee Road. The north side of Granada, where  
 14 US-1 is, and the south side of Granada, is  
 15 different, but the majority of our streets have  
 16 single trees; North Gables, South Gables. I  
 17 don't see very much planting in any of the  
 18 swales. In fact, I saw almost no planting.  
 19 So I don't know how effective this  
 20 Ordinance was in 2014, because I really haven't  
 21 seen the benefit of the Ordinance in the past  
 22 eight years. If you can show me some beautiful  
 23 photos of where people have taken advantage of  
 24 this Ordinance in the past eight years, I would  
 25 love to see what you have.

1 MR. WITHERS: And I'm talking about  
 2 boulevards. I'm not talking about little areas  
 3 stuck behind the Merrick House. I'm taking  
 4 about full-blown Granada Boulevard, Columbus  
 5 Boulevard, Riviera. That's what I'm referring  
 6 to.  
 7 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: The swale planting  
 8 package is a current Public Works permit that's  
 9 being implemented all over the City. This is  
 10 just one example I saw driving.  
 11 MR. WITHERS: Okay.  
 12 MR. REVUELTA: This is Toledo Street, from  
 13 Coral Way to Valencia.  
 14 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Yeah.  
 15 MR. WITHERS: So where is this one now?  
 16 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: This is a Black Olive  
 17 street that I found in North Gables, near the  
 18 Biltmore.  
 19 MR. WITHERS: Wait. That's an Oak tree,  
 20 though, no, on the left?  
 21 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Exactly. It was very  
 22 difficult to find a street that had one  
 23 species, without others already being mixed in  
 24 already. You know, when a tree falls or, let's  
 25 say, the City has to take it out because of a

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1 lightning strike, we get the homeowner involved  
 2 and allow them to help choose. A lot of  
 3 homeowners like different species. They might  
 4 want a flowering tree. They might want another  
 5 type of native tree. They want something very  
 6 resilient to hurricanes. They want something  
 7 that doesn't stain. So we end up replacing the  
 8 Black Olive trees with other species anyway.  
 9 That's our current practice.  
 10 Here's another mixed species photo in the  
 11 North Gables. You can see pretty mature Live  
 12 Oaks on the left, and on the right we have a  
 13 native stopper tree, that are smaller, because  
 14 we have powerlines above. So we want to have  
 15 the option to plant trees below powerlines, and  
 16 we can't use the Live Oaks on the right side,  
 17 because it's too large to go under the  
 18 powerline. So we have this condition many  
 19 places around the City where you have  
 20 powerlines.  
 21 Here's a mixed species on Alhambra Circle.  
 22 The Alhambra Circle road median is a great  
 23 example of all different mixed up trees. You  
 24 see Coconuts, you see ficus, and Live Oaks all  
 25 here in this image.

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1 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: The linear park, The  
 2 City plants those trees and maintains that.  
 3 Here's a great example, again, on Prado.  
 4 You have Live Oaks on the right side in front  
 5 of the residences and then you have a smaller  
 6 flowering Cassia tree on the left side, just to  
 7 get variety and have some flowering trees in  
 8 the environment.  
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: How do you deal with  
 10 areas that are specific, for example, what Chip  
 11 was mentioning? Are there certain streets or  
 12 boulevards that are very specific, that have  
 13 not been mixed? Have you looked at possibly  
 14 keeping those areas that have not been mixed in  
 15 uniform?  
 16 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Yes. We do respect  
 17 that already. And like I said, there are very  
 18 few of those streets. Coral Way happens to be  
 19 a Dade County street. We don't plant trees on  
 20 the Dade County swale. That's their  
 21 jurisdiction.  
 22 Columbus is ficus, the big Banyan, Indian  
 23 Banyan. There's just no room to plant anything  
 24 under those trees because of their large root  
 25 system. So they have stayed a single tree

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1 MR. WITHERS: Okay. But the neighbors  
 2 didn't plant any of that stuff, right? That  
 3 was all City planting?  
 4 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Some do. Well, some  
 5 do, in their swales.  
 6 MR. WITHERS: But, I mean, I don't think  
 7 the neighbors planted those palm trees, did  
 8 they?  
 9 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: No. That happens to  
 10 be the Coral Gables Country Club, but when  
 11 people are developing new homes or doing  
 12 renovation, as part of their building permit,  
 13 they're allowed to plant different species.  
 14 Here's Country Club Prado. Again, very  
 15 mixed up all over Prado. I think what people  
 16 really love here, it's like a tree park, with  
 17 different species, and the ability to bring in  
 18 some amazing flowering trees.  
 19 MR. REVUELTA: Are people allowed to plant  
 20 on Country Club Prado in the center?  
 21 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: No. That is a City  
 22 maintained property in the center, but they're  
 23 allowed to plant in their swale, on their side.  
 24 MR. REVUELTA: On their side, but not on  
 25 the City liner park?

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1 species street.  
 2 MR. TORRE: I think this needs to be split  
 3 in two things, because we're talking about the  
 4 initial height of a tree, as opposed to the  
 5 trees that are allowed, which I think is what  
 6 they're concerning themselves with.  
 7 So, in this Code verbiage, I'm going to  
 8 take the word, height, out. I'm going to read  
 9 this without the word, height, and see what it  
 10 says.  
 11 "Exceptions to planting for tree varieties  
 12 whose average mature height is 25 feet or less  
 13 may be approved by Green Space Management. The  
 14 approval of the trees under 25 feet may be  
 15 approved."  
 16 Forgetting the starting, is that already an  
 17 approved thing? Can you install trees less  
 18 than 25 feet? So if this is clarifying the  
 19 beginning height, you take the height at the  
 20 beginning away, then the rest is, you already  
 21 have the right to install trees that are 25 or  
 22 less, right?  
 23 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Uh-huh.  
 24 MR. TORRE: So a tree that's 12 or 15 feet  
 25 in full height, you already do that? You're

1 already doing it in some cases?  
 2 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Well, it says, "Street  
 3 trees are required to be 16 feet in height."  
 4 MR. TORRE: But when they're not -- okay.  
 5 So if you were to go with a tree that's 25 feet  
 6 or less in its mature form, you have to find it  
 7 at 16 feet and then you can go with it?  
 8 MS. CABRERA: 16 feet.  
 9 MR. TORRE: So if you can't find 16 feet --  
 10 those trees that fall under those small tree  
 11 things are almost impossible to find.  
 12 MS. CABRERA: Correct.  
 13 MR. TORRE: So all you're saying is, I want  
 14 to be able to use this option of trees that are  
 15 25 feet or less, and I think that goes to the  
 16 point --  
 17 MS. CABRERA: Yeah, because by default,  
 18 it's sort of --  
 19 MR. TORRE: That's really the bottom line.  
 20 If that is already a fact, then the only issue  
 21 is, how much of it can happen by virtue of the  
 22 trees -- you're never going to find the tree,  
 23 so it's not that your --  
 24 MS. CABRERA: Yes, that's exactly what it  
 25 is.

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any other comment?  
 2 MR. REVUELTA: The whole point is, Chip's  
 3 concerns, which are with the way the Code is  
 4 written by right now, are not being addressed  
 5 or are not affected by this amendment.  
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Let's go ahead and  
 7 open it up for public comment, before we  
 8 continue further discussion.  
 9 MR. REVUELTA: Okay.  
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Is there anybody that  
 11 we have in the Chambers that would like to  
 12 speak on this item? No? So there's nobody  
 13 here?  
 14 Anybody on Zoom?  
 15 THE SECRETARY: No.  
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Anybody on the phone  
 17 platform?  
 18 THE SECRETARY: No.  
 19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: At this time, I'll go  
 20 ahead and close it for public comment.  
 21 Let's continue.  
 22 MR. REVUELTA: I wanted to ask Chip --  
 23 Chip, just to clarify, your problem is with the  
 24 way this section of the Code is written right  
 25 now, it's not really with the amendment? The

1 MR. TORRE: It's just going to be more of  
 2 it or less of it.  
 3 MS. CABRERA: We have a policy, that we  
 4 really haven't seen it, because you can't find  
 5 the diversity, but otherwise you would have  
 6 diversity. So that's really what it boils down  
 7 to.  
 8 MR. TORRE: So this is more allowing of  
 9 that opportunity to happen.  
 10 MR. BEHAR: It's allowing to go to a  
 11 smaller tree.  
 12 MR. TORRE: But those trees can happen. So  
 13 you're promoting that option or not promoting  
 14 the option, in a sense, or helping --  
 15 MS. CABRERA: You're allowing to actually  
 16 do what the plan was, but if you don't like the  
 17 plan, then obviously you don't want to lower  
 18 the height, right, because by default you're  
 19 getting rid of one, because of this other  
 20 issue.  
 21 MR. TORRE: This is the grease that helps  
 22 the other part get in there, and, I think,  
 23 without this, you don't have the options of  
 24 doing it as much.  
 25 MS. CABRERA: That's right.

1 amendment is a mathematical --  
 2 MR. WITHERS: Well, the amendment makes it  
 3 a lot easier for this to move forward. Right  
 4 now, I present to you that it hasn't moved  
 5 forward in any significant way in the past  
 6 eight years, because it's very difficult to  
 7 meet the terms. This allows -- you know, and,  
 8 again, in all fairness, the photos you showed  
 9 of Country Club Prado, you've got a huge  
 10 boulevard in the middle before Andrew, and it  
 11 became a burn zone for the City of Coral  
 12 Gables, that it was nicely -- you know, the  
 13 City hasn't replaced what it was supposed to.  
 14 The little stretch on whatever --  
 15 MR. REVUELTA: Toledo.  
 16 MR. WITHERS: Toledo -- but, I mean, maybe  
 17 I'm not clear on this. If you take a boulevard  
 18 like Granada Boulevard, from Bird to the  
 19 fountain, and people started putting up trees  
 20 in between the Black Olive trees, you don't  
 21 think that would change the entire look of that  
 22 boulevard, if people started putting, you know,  
 23 twelve-foot Slash Pines or Palm trees or  
 24 whatever in that boulevard area?  
 25 And, again, it's totally subjective on what

1 the green people committee allows it to be  
2 built. There's no standard as to what tree can  
3 -- you only have a height. As long as they  
4 feel that it's a nice tree to put there, it can  
5 go there. You could put up -- you know, you  
6 could put anything in there.

7 So my point is, is that what the City wants  
8 to see? The City wants to see their boulevards  
9 filled up with trees in the swales? Is that  
10 what we want? And I suggest that most people  
11 don't. I mean, I bet you, if you put it out to  
12 a referendum tomorrow and asked the citizens of  
13 Coral Gables, "Do you want your boulevards to  
14 be filled in with trees," I would say, 90  
15 percent of them would say, "No, we don't."  
16 Now, I could be wrong --

17 MR. BEHAR: No. I think you're being -- 99  
18 percent.

19 MR. WITHERS: Yeah. So I don't know why  
20 we're even here talking about this, because I  
21 don't think it's what the people want. Some  
22 people might. They want to build new homes and  
23 put stuff, but most of the people, I don't  
24 think, want you to start filling up their  
25 swales and their neighbors' swales with trees.

1 available, I understand.

2 To me, I agree with you, I would rather  
3 keep the consistent to one, and that the  
4 beautiful thing about our streets. You drive  
5 by and you see -- and I don't like -- I  
6 personally don't like Black Olives, and when I  
7 drive on Santa Maria, you know, it's all Black  
8 Olives, but it looks nice, because it's  
9 consistent. To put something else on the swale  
10 -- well, I don't think you could do it, because  
11 whatever you put on the swale has to be -- you  
12 know, One, you have to give the City a hold  
13 harmless, I think, because you cannot put it on  
14 -- outside of your property. Inside of your  
15 property, you could do whatever.

16 So I don't think the issue is, you know, to  
17 have diversity in trees. I think they're  
18 coming in for the minimum height on the trees,  
19 instead of being sixteen, to allow for less.  
20 My concern is, if we don't put a minimum size,  
21 I know we're going to get a six-foot tree.

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yeah, because it's  
23 going to be challenged.

24 MR. BEHAR: Yeah. You know, I do not want  
25 to do anything that takes away the requirements

1 I don't. I mean, they get mad when people  
2 plant bushes in their swales, much less trees.

3 So that's my feeling on this, and I don't  
4 know -- I really haven't seen anything from  
5 2014. The pictures you have were nice, but all  
6 of those are kind of anomalies as to what the  
7 main focus of this thing was.

8 MR. BEHAR: You know, Chip, where I see  
9 this is in new developments, where the trees  
10 are going to be on the right-of-way. You may  
11 not be able to find in 16-foot Bridal Veil, if  
12 you want to use that.

13 MR. WITHERS: Yeah.

14 MR. BEHAR: It would allow to go to a  
15 smaller tree. And, you know, and it may not be  
16 in a neighborhood. It may be more in a  
17 Commercial area. I'm thinking, you know, the  
18 project, for example, by Merrick Park, which,  
19 you know, for the most part, all of those are  
20 new projects, and if you have, you know, a side  
21 of the street that already has Oaks, I think  
22 you should put Oaks on the other side, you  
23 know, but if you don't have anything, you're  
24 going to set precedent, you know, and you want  
25 to go with something that is not, you know,

1 to keep the same consistency, as you mentioned,  
2 throughout. I think that's -- I, a hundred  
3 percent, agree with you and I'm not going to  
4 support anything that is deviating from that,  
5 you know. I'm not in favor of lowering from 16  
6 to no -- no, you know, minimum size.

7 It's more difficult -- you're right, it is  
8 more difficult to find, you know, a 16-footer,  
9 but if you're doing a big development, hey, I  
10 think 16 --

11 MS. CABRERA: So it's more difficult to  
12 find, the diversity, in the lower (sic)  
13 heights. So you would be, by default, getting  
14 more diversity. So if that's definitely not  
15 what you want -- that's not -- this -- you know  
16 --

17 MR. WITHERS: So explain to me the need for  
18 diversity in the neighborhoods of trees. What  
19 is it? Is it an aesthetic thing? Is it just a  
20 feel good thing? I mean, I'm not quite -- I  
21 understand what you're saying, but what does  
22 diversity, really, really, do for the  
23 neighborhood? It changes the look.

24 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Well, first of all, it  
25 could be an aesthetic thing. Diversity and



1 aesthetics would be -- like the images I showed  
2 of Prado, for instance. You get beautiful pops  
3 of color with flowering trees. You have native  
4 trees to attract different wildlife. You might  
5 have some exotic trees that are really unusual,  
6 and that's an aesthetic diversity, and then you  
7 also have the environmental diversity.

8 It's important to have environmental  
9 diversity within a City, because if any one  
10 tree species has an illness or a sickness or a  
11 blight and dies out --

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Well, the palms --

13 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: -- we want to make  
14 sure we have other species close by it to take  
15 over for it and fill in the gaps. So you've  
16 got to think of that. So there are two  
17 different types of diversities.

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: See, to me it would  
19 look more like the Grove.

20 MR. REVUELTA: Chip --

21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Coconut Grove has --

22 MS. CABRERA: Will look more like, what?

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Like Coconut Grove.

24 Coconut Grove, to me, has a diversity of  
25 species within blocks that are just mixed in

1 amount of feet from the sidewalk or so forth  
2 for somebody to walk by, but you're allowing  
3 people to challenge that, I think, without  
4 being specific.

5 MR. REVUELTA: What I'm finding in my  
6 house, which is behind -- in my property, I  
7 have Tabebuias. I like trees with yellow  
8 flowers. They flower very timidly, because of  
9 three Black Olives, which I love, in front of  
10 my house. They don't allow it enough sunlight  
11 for these trees to develop or to bloom. So I'm  
12 just thinking now of the logistics.

13 And I don't have a problem with what you  
14 guys are proposing, and I can understand what  
15 Chip is saying, that by lowering the height,  
16 now you're really going to open the door for  
17 this diversity that -- he's making a good  
18 point, that there are certain areas of the City  
19 that should not have the diversity, according  
20 to some of us.

21 So my questions are, if we're going to  
22 allow diversity, what's going to happen to that  
23 diversity that is between trees that are maybe  
24 forty feet in the center or something like  
25 that, that are not going to allow these new

1 throughout, than I see in the Gables.

2 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Let me use Miracle  
3 Mile. I mean, we're all familiar with Miracle  
4 Mile. It was professionally designed by  
5 landscape architects. The tree species are  
6 mixed.

7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yeah, but there's also  
8 certain areas that are predominant with a  
9 certain species, and I think that's -- that's  
10 an issue that I'm having for certain areas.  
11 While I do think that there are areas that  
12 mixing would be appropriate, I also think there  
13 are certain areas where they would not be. But  
14 if you've had this from 2014 going forward, how  
15 do you adjust that?

16 One of the things that I see, that Chip  
17 says is, now, by lowering it, you're going to  
18 be able to implement it. So now you may be  
19 seeing it more, where we didn't see it before,  
20 because you weren't able to implement it.

21 But I agree with Robert, also, that you  
22 should have a certain height minimum. You  
23 shouldn't just allow any height. If somebody  
24 comes and demonstrates -- and I understand that  
25 you say you have to have seven feet or whatever

1 lower trees to bloom or to grow crooked,  
2 because that's what they do? They just  
3 basically bend over to go get the light.  
4 That's one point that I wanted to ask, was  
5 there any studies on that?

6 Number Two, is the amendment reacting to  
7 certain streets that should be kept the way  
8 that I think most of us think should be kept or  
9 is the amendment silent on that? This can  
10 happen anywhere?

11 MS. CABRERA: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I think it can happen  
13 anywhere.

14 MS. CABRERA: Yes.

15 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Anywhere.

16 MR. REVUELTA: I'm just thinking, I mean,  
17 some of the concerns that we're talking about,  
18 the streets that we keep mentioning, there's  
19 probably six, then, that should -- in my  
20 opinion, should be addressed in the amendment,  
21 saying you can't do this in these areas, that  
22 this is the context that we want it to be.  
23 This is the landscape aesthetics that we want  
24 to keep. And I do think that certain thoughts  
25 should be given to the fact that some of this

1 lower planting, in all likelihood, is going to  
 2 grow bent and go look for the light and there  
 3 is going to be a loss of some of that formality  
 4 that there is.  
 5 I'm not a landscape architect, but I know  
 6 what's happening to me in my own house, and --  
 7 I don't have a problem with that happening. I  
 8 live on Castile. I don't have a problem with  
 9 that on Castile or Asturias, and, you know, you  
 10 start naming streets, but I think when you're  
 11 talking about major boulevards, I think to  
 12 address what Chip is saying, it would be good  
 13 to address that, because he's seen some of the  
 14 other things that he's concerned about, not  
 15 wanting to turn Coral Gables into, blank,  
 16 another city. You already can do that, right?  
 17 That's already allowed.  
 18 So I think that's probably a conversation  
 19 for another -- maybe we need to add one of  
 20 those things that we add to these motions, to  
 21 bring us something back, but I don't have a  
 22 problem with what is being proposed. I have a  
 23 problem when it's boulevards, as Chip has been  
 24 pointing out, and I have a logistical question  
 25 of what's happening in my own house and

1 tree is not appropriate, because it can't grow  
 2 in that environment, because it's under the  
 3 canopy of a bigger tree or the exposure is not  
 4 right, she wouldn't approve it, but, of course,  
 5 that would be at the Staff level.  
 6 MR. TORRE: Or to his comment, it just  
 7 doesn't feel like that should be in our  
 8 neighborhood or it doesn't feel like that  
 9 should be on my street, so is there some of  
 10 that weigh in? I mean, is that something  
 11 that --  
 12 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Every street tree  
 13 that's planted in a swale in Coral Gables, a  
 14 permit's required, a Public Works permit, to  
 15 plant in the swale. So those are all reviewed.  
 16 MR. TORRE: And how do you answer the two  
 17 or three major concerns about the loss of the  
 18 tradition, I guess? How would you address  
 19 that?  
 20 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Well, Suramy, there's  
 21 nothing codified to keep --  
 22 MS. CABRERA: Yeah, we spoke about this a  
 23 little bit.  
 24 MR. TORRE: I mean, I think that's the  
 25 bottom line.

1 wondering how is that going to -- what's going  
 2 to be the end result.  
 3 MR. TORRE: So this is really the freeing  
 4 up of the ability for the Staff to allow this.  
 5 It's a freeing up -- it's really more like,  
 6 okay, you got more of this option on your  
 7 table.  
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: It allows it to be up  
 9 to them.  
 10 MR. TORRE: Right. So this is the concern  
 11 that now you've sort of allowed this to really  
 12 start to flourish, but what I ask is: In all  
 13 of these conversations, one thing that hasn't  
 14 been asked, Staff, from my personal experience  
 15 and the past history, has to weigh in and has  
 16 to make the call and has to give you the  
 17 permit. So it all comes down to what you will  
 18 allow, to answer his question, and his question  
 19 and all of these questions. Really, it goes  
 20 down to, would you be the one letting this go  
 21 this direction or more strict towards this  
 22 direction. So that really goes back to, what  
 23 is the expectation upon Staff.  
 24 MS. CABRERA: Actually, you do the reviews  
 25 for the plantings in the right-of-way. So if a

1 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: There's nothing  
 2 codified that mandates consistent street trees  
 3 in the Code.  
 4 MS. CABRERA: Right. And I think that,  
 5 when I spoke with Deena, because I wanted to  
 6 understand, because I watched this the last  
 7 time and I saw that there was a real concern  
 8 about, you know, how reducing the height,  
 9 which, to us, is a simple amendment to the  
 10 Code, is a big concern, because it's going to  
 11 change the look of the streets and it may very  
 12 well change the look of some streets, depending  
 13 on what the arborists feel that is appropriate  
 14 and would best -- would thrive in that area,  
 15 would look good in the mix of the species.  
 16 You know, I've talked to Deena a lot. I  
 17 like gardening and I pretend like I'm a -- but  
 18 I'm not an arborist. I don't know like how to  
 19 mix different types of species and what grows  
 20 best under what and all of that, but she does,  
 21 and that's the idea, that she has to approve  
 22 it.  
 23 MR. WITHERS: So do you like this idea? Do  
 24 you think it will look good?  
 25 MS. CABRERA: I think, on a case by case

1 basis --

2 MR. WITHERS: No, I'm asking -- but you

3 can't go case by case. That's the problem.

4 MS. CABRERA: I do. I do. I think it

5 looks really beautiful when you go through and

6 you see that, all of a sudden, there is, you

7 know, the silk -- whatever it's called, the

8 Saba tree, with the pink flowers, in the middle

9 of like --

10 MR. WITHERS: It blooms twice a year, but

11 go ahead, for two weeks.

12 MS. CABRERA: It does, but it has a

13 beautiful trunk, right?

14 MR. WITHERS: So the other 50 weeks of the

15 year, it's just a stick.

16 MS. CABRERA: It has a really beautiful

17 trunk. I mean, Fairchild Tropical Gardens

18 probably has more species than anybody and I

19 don't think that it's ugly in any sense. It's

20 a beautiful --

21 MR. WITHERS: So what's the setback without

22 a sidewalk?

23 MS. CABRERA: What is the, what?

24 MR. WITHERS: What's the setback from the

25 street without a sidewalk? If your home --

1 MR. WITHERS: So it's six and six. Is that

2 the triangle --

3 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Minimum, depending on

4 the tree species. If someone says they want to

5 plant a Live Oak, in my review, I would say,

6 "You need to be at least twelve feet away," you

7 know.

8 MR. WITHERS: So, for example, if someone

9 wanted to plant six Gumbo Limbo trees on

10 Granada Boulevard in front of their Black Olive

11 trees, six feet off the street, would you allow

12 that?

13 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Of course not. That's

14 not --

15 MR. WITHERS: What would you allow to be

16 planted on Granada, Palm trees?

17 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Well --

18 MR. WITHERS: Look, you're the gatekeeper.

19 You're the subjective gatekeeper on this, which

20 I honor your profession and I honor your

21 expertise, but I'm just --

22 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: I would continue to

23 say that we always give the residents -- input

24 of the person living in front of the home and

25 make sure that what is in front of their swale,

1 like on Granada, where there's no sidewalk, how

2 close to the street can they plant?

3 MS. CABRERA: I don't know if there's a --

4 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Minimum six, seven

5 feet off the edge of pavement.

6 MR. WITHERS: So you've got a 40-foot

7 setback there on those homes. So you allow

8 them to go six feet from the street, then?

9 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Well, depending on the

10 tree species. If it's a small tree.

11 MR. REVUELTA: Is it by Code or by

12 experience?

13 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: The Code right now

14 says it's six feet distance from driveway

15 approaches --

16 MR. WITHERS: I'm sorry, from where?

17 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Six feet --

18 MS. CABRERA: From driveway approaches.

19 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: -- from driveway

20 approaches is the closest a tree could be

21 planted in the swale. We respect that.

22 MR. WITHERS: No, I'm talking about, from

23 the edge of the street.

24 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Uh-huh. From the edge

25 of the street, we respect six feet.

1 in their swale, is compatible with their whole

2 landscape design.

3 MR. WITHERS: Not the street landscape but

4 with their landscape?

5 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: It does not have to

6 stick with the street species necessarily, but

7 we look at their whole landscape to make sure

8 it's pleasing and environmentally going to

9 work. You know, certain tree species have to

10 be placed together to be a successful

11 landscape.

12 MR. WITHERS: So what could be acceptable

13 on Granada, if it was -- I'm just trying to get

14 an idea --

15 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Under the Black

16 Olives? It's very difficult.

17 MR. WITHERS: I don't know why people would

18 plant Black Olives if they're already there.

19 I'm talking about what trees do you think would

20 go under that?

21 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: I mean, there are

22 hundreds of varieties of things that could

23 work, but under Black Olives, it's very

24 difficult. You know, as Mr. Revuelta said,

25 it's very difficult near those big Black Olives

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1 on Granada.

2 So naturally -- I think naturally probably

3 Granada stayed a monoculture because of that

4 reason, if that makes any sense.

5 MR. WITHERS: I don't have any --

6 MS. MIRO: I have a question. Deena, I

7 have a question for you. You mentioned that

8 you always get the homeowner's input, right.

9 So has there ever been a situation where you've

10 gone out to a neighborhood and got the

11 homeowner's input and done something different

12 than what the input was from the homeowner?

13 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: No. We always work

14 with the homeowners to do what's appropriate

15 aesthetically. Of course, they ask for our

16 opinion, because we are professional arborists

17 and horticulturalists and we might know the

18 species that's more appropriate better than

19 they do, so --

20 MS. MIRO: I understand. So, like, for

21 instance, Mr. Revuelta like trees that have

22 yellow flowers. So if somebody wants a tree

23 with yellow flowers and you don't think it's

24 appropriate, has there ever been a time where

25 you've said, "Oh, I don't -- you know, we don't

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1 to enable something to move forward, that I

2 don't -- now, would a minimum -- yeah, a

3 minimum would work.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: But that's not going

5 to change the species.

6 MS. CABRERA: Exactly.

7 MS. MIRO: Right. Exactly.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Would anybody

9 like to make a motion either way?

10 MR. REVUELTA: Is there a consensus that at

11 least we should request that part of the

12 addendum should clarify that there's certain

13 boulevards and avenues that should keep the

14 current context that they have now, because I

15 think that was one of the main concerns that

16 Chip has brought up, and I think most of

17 us share that?

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: How do you go about

19 quantifying that at this point? I mean, we

20 could say a couple of boulevards or streets,

21 but --

22 MR. BEHAR: I don't think you can. And the

23 more we talk about it, the more I'm agreeing

24 with my colleagues over there.

25 MS. MIRO: And I wanted to say something.

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1 think it's appropriate. We are the

2 professionals" and then it's been

3 different than --

4 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Of course.

5 MS. MIRO: So we listen to the input, but

6 we don't necessarily in every case do whatever

7 the homeowner wants.

8 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Professional opinion.

9 MS. MIRO: Right. Okay.

10 And, then, Chip, I had a question for you.

11 MR. WITHERS: Uh-huh.

12 MS. MIRO: Listening to your concerns and

13 also the other comments, do you feel that if we

14 put a minimum height, would that appease you at

15 all or not at all?

16 MR. WITHERS: Well, I mean, to me, this is

17 an enabling Ordinance to allow something I

18 disagree with, and that's the only reason I'm

19 voting against it, because it just enables

20 something that I don't think is the right thing

21 to do.

22 Listen, this is just my opinion. I mean,

23 you guys -- obviously, I honor and respect you

24 more than you think I respect you, but I do.

25 So, this is, you know, just my feeling, this is

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1 I think that, as a Board, we did our due

2 diligence by sending this back to Landscaping,

3 I think, in hopes of having some of these

4 questions answered, but it seems to me, and you

5 tell me if I'm wrong, that we have the same

6 concerns and the same questions that we did the

7 first time this item came before, and I think

8 no one feels comfortable because of certain,

9 you know, things.

10 It's not that we don't want to work with

11 you, but there's certain items or parts about

12 this that, like Chip says, that enable change.

13 MR. REVUELTA: I think identifying the

14 boulevards and the streets, we have that in all

15 municipalities, when we're dealing with Zoning

16 issues, right-of-ways that are greater than 50

17 or 60 or 70 feet, that affect Zoning issues,

18 the same way, I think, could be an approach --

19 I don't think it's difficult for them to

20 identify, based on what we're saying, which are

21 the major streets and boulevards that have the

22 context that we're concerned about. Maybe I'm

23 in a minority here thinking that it's a very

24 simple task.

25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We don't have that

1 information tonight.  
 2 MR. REVUELTA: Oh, no, no, I know that.  
 3 MS. CABRERA: So I think it's important for  
 4 you all to know that this actually was brought  
 5 to Staff by the Commission. It wasn't Staff  
 6 initiated, it was by the Commission, because  
 7 they do want to see the diversity, and when  
 8 Staff is asked, "Well, you can't get that with  
 9 the heights limitations that we have."  
 10 So if it's a, no, then, you know, it's a,  
 11 no. I mean, that's perfectly fine. I mean,  
 12 Staff is going to go in the direction that the  
 13 Commission ends up going, and your opinion to  
 14 the Commission will obviously help all of the  
 15 other members make a decision on what you all  
 16 do not like, which is becoming very clear, that  
 17 you don't like the diversity.  
 18 MR. BEHAR: You know where I could see a  
 19 diversity? If you were creating a new little  
 20 park area or something, that you could be  
 21 independent, but I think -- I agree with Chip  
 22 and most of the other comments, if you're on a  
 23 street, you want to keep it consistent, and I  
 24 would not like to see, on a street -- it  
 25 doesn't have to be a boulevard, that you have

1 you've taken to go over this for us once again,  
 2 but I really like the way that things look  
 3 right now and I share the same concerns or  
 4 feelings as my colleague here. I'd like to  
 5 make a motion to deny.  
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So you would like to  
 7 make a motion to deny as presented?  
 8 MS. MIRO: As presented, yes.  
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Is there a second?  
 10 MR. WITHERS: I'll second that.  
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Chip seconded that.  
 12 Any discussion?  
 13 MR. TORRE: I'm going to vote opposite, but  
 14 just to clarify why, I think that Staff has had  
 15 this opportunity to do this, and I don't know  
 16 that this really opens the floodgates in my  
 17 view -- in my view -- and I think we have to  
 18 give them a little bit of the tools, but at the  
 19 same time, the respect that they're going to do  
 20 what I think Coral Gables has already been  
 21 doing.  
 22 I go through this rigmarole a lot, and  
 23 they're tough, since the time that I've been  
 24 working here, and I don't think it's going to  
 25 change, and to add more layers to the City and

1 whether they're Oak Trees or they're Black  
 2 Olives, introduce a -- what do you call -- the  
 3 Tabebuias.  
 4 MR. REVUELTA: Tabebuias.  
 5 MR. BEHAR: -- the yellow Tabebuias,  
 6 because -- you know, so you've got to be  
 7 consistent. So what I don't want is for this  
 8 to open up that possibility for it to happen.  
 9 If you had a park setting, well, you could  
 10 do -- you know, like you showed me some of the  
 11 photographs --  
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Diversity.  
 13 MR. BEHAR: -- diversity. I'm okay with  
 14 that, but not along the streets. I think that,  
 15 for me, and I didn't think I was going to say  
 16 this, but I'm agreeing with my colleague over  
 17 there.  
 18 MR. REVUELTA: And he said he respects you  
 19 a lot.  
 20 MR. TORRE: I'm going to try to make a  
 21 motion. It may flunk.  
 22 MS. MIRO: I was about to do the same.  
 23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Claudia.  
 24 MS. MIRO: Yes. I've heard everybody's  
 25 comments and I really respect the time that

1 to -- I think what you guys do already puts a  
 2 lot of burdens, the restrictions that we have  
 3 to have. So I think this is just giving you a  
 4 tool to work with, so --  
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any other discussion?  
 6 No?  
 7 Call the roll, please.  
 8 THE SECRETARY: The motion is to deny,  
 9 second by Chip Withers.  
 10 Luis Revuelta?  
 11 MR. REVUELTA: I'm going to vote, no, but I  
 12 would really like to, at some point, see the  
 13 whole Ordinance come back to try to address  
 14 some of the concerns that we have, but I don't  
 15 know how to do that.  
 16 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?  
 17 MR. TORRE: No.  
 18 THE SECRETARY: Chip Withers?  
 19 MR. WITHERS: Yes.  
 20 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?  
 21 MR. BEHAR: I'm going to vote, yes.  
 22 THE SECRETARY: Claudia Miro?  
 23 MS. MIRO: Yes.  
 24 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?  
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: For the same reason

1 that Venny stated, I feel confident on the  
 2 Staff and I'm going to vote, no.  
 3 MR. COLLER: So we have a tie vote. I've  
 4 become an expert on tied vote. Let me just say  
 5 this before you, if I might. The Board has an  
 6 opportunity -- at this point, any motion is in  
 7 order, to try to reach a consensus.  
 8 May I make a suggestion of a possible  
 9 amendment that might encompass some of the  
 10 concerns for your consideration, and I won't be  
 11 hurt in the least if you say, "Why are you  
 12 getting involved in this?"  
 13 MR. REVUELTA: Why are you --  
 14 MR. COLLER: One of the things I was going  
 15 to add was, consideration should be given to  
 16 the unique aesthetic of certain streets where  
 17 species and height predominate.  
 18 MR. REVUELTA: I like that.  
 19 MR. BEHAR: I like that, too.  
 20 MR. COLLER: So I don't know how Staff  
 21 feels about it, but if that --  
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: But isn't that what's  
 23 happening now?  
 24 MS. CABRERA: I think Staff does that,  
 25 anyway, but codifying it would make it really

1 minimum when they take it to the City  
 2 Commission? So the amendment would have the  
 3 two-part amendment --  
 4 MR. BEHAR: Then I'm going to make a  
 5 motion, a new motion, that we leave it up to  
 6 the Staff, with -- what was the wording you put  
 7 on, Mr. Coller?  
 8 MR. COLLER: The wording I would add to the  
 9 end of that part of the urban canopy, then I  
 10 would say, "Provided, however, consideration  
 11 should be given to the unique aesthetic of  
 12 certain streets where a species and heights  
 13 predominate."  
 14 MR. REVUELTA: And for Staff to  
 15 recommend --  
 16 MR. COLLER: Now, what I would suggest you  
 17 do is, maybe your recommendation to the  
 18 Commission is, you've added that language. If  
 19 you feel that a minimum height should be given,  
 20 but you don't have a height, then, perhaps, as  
 21 part of your recommendation, you recommend to  
 22 the Commission that Staff should consider a  
 23 minimum height.  
 24 MR. BEHAR: I'm going to make a motion.  
 25 You want to second it, and you make that

1 clear.  
 2 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Yes, this was brought  
 3 up by Commission, not Staff. I just want to  
 4 repeat that.  
 5 MR. WITHERS: I love you're doing that now,  
 6 because --  
 7 MR. BEHAR: Since that's a tie, we need a  
 8 new motion.  
 9 MR. COLLER: You need a new motion, or if  
 10 you can't come to anything but a tie, then it  
 11 goes without a recommendation.  
 12 MR. BEHAR: Well, I would offer a new  
 13 motion, that incorporates that language.  
 14 MR. REVUELTA: And it incorporates your  
 15 minimum --  
 16 MR. BEHAR: Of a minimum. I don't know  
 17 what a minimum would be. You know, I may not  
 18 need a minimum. With that, it may be  
 19 sufficient, that language, not to have a  
 20 minimum.  
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I would be in favor if  
 22 there was a minimum height. I'm concerned,  
 23 without having any minimum height at all.  
 24 MR. REVUELTA: Without setting a number,  
 25 why don't we trust Staff to come up with a

1 friendly amendment?  
 2 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.  
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So, Robert, you're  
 4 going to make a new motion.  
 5 MS. CABRERA: Just, I asked Deena,  
 6 because --  
 7 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Minimum height, maybe  
 8 I can -- again, the clear distances from the  
 9 ground should be the minimum height, not the  
 10 overall height of the tree.  
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: The clear trunk.  
 12 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Clear trunk.  
 13 MS. CABRERA: And you're comfortable with  
 14 that? Because I don't want us to leave here  
 15 and you thinking that we're going to go in and  
 16 say, "The minimum height is 12 feet," and then  
 17 that's not --  
 18 MR. BEHAR: What would you think is a good  
 19 minimum clear --  
 20 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: If there's a sidewalk  
 21 where pedestrians have to walk, seven feet  
 22 minimum clear. If there's no sidewalk and if  
 23 it's in a swale --  
 24 MR. BEHAR: Why don't we keep it seven feet  
 25 consistently?

1 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Could be lower.  
 2 MS. MIRO: I'm sorry, didn't we say earlier  
 3 that we don't want somebody to put up a six  
 4 foot tree? So one foot more, we're  
 5 comfortable?  
 6 MR. BEHAR: No. No. No. The trunk.  
 7 MS. CABRERA: The clear trunk, not the  
 8 overall height.  
 9 (Simultaneous speaking.)  
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yeah, but let me make  
 11 a comment. I know that on the street I live  
 12 in, the City went ahead and planted certain  
 13 trees that were way below that height.  
 14 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Because of  
 15 availability problems.  
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And they have grown  
 17 and they look beautiful and they're grown.  
 18 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: They will grow.  
 19 That's why we're here. That's the bottom line  
 20 of why we're here, right there, and all  
 21 different directions. So that's the bottom  
 22 line of why we're here.  
 23 MR. BEHAR: All right. And we made a new  
 24 motion.  
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Can we be clear on the

1 certain streets where species and height  
 2 predominate. Further, that the minimum trunk  
 3 height should --  
 4 MR. REVUELTA: Clear.  
 5 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Clear.  
 6 MR. COLLER: -- clear trunk height" -- are  
 7 you getting this, Jennifer?  
 8 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Measurement from  
 9 grade.  
 10 MR. COLLER: -- clear trunk height should  
 11 be eight feet.  
 12 MR. BEHAR: Okay. We have a motion and a  
 13 second.  
 14 MR. REVUELTA: I second it.  
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any other comments?  
 16 MR. WITHERS: I just have a question. So  
 17 you're not saying that you have to plant a tree  
 18 that matches. I don't really understand how  
 19 that changes the landscape on this, because  
 20 you're still going to --  
 21 MR. REVUELTA: Because it controls the  
 22 major thoroughfares that you and us have been  
 23 talking about. It doesn't control the minor  
 24 streets.  
 25 MR. BEHAR: I think it will be throughout

1 motion, please? So the motion is to approve,  
 2 with the condition that Craig went ahead and  
 3 stated?  
 4 MR. COLLER: But do you want a minimum --  
 5 what do you call it, a clearance, a trunk  
 6 height?  
 7 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Clear trunk, is the  
 8 technical term.  
 9 MR. COLLER: Clear trunk. And is it your  
 10 desire that the minimum clear trunk should be  
 11 seven feet?  
 12 MR. REVUELTA: I would make it eight, just  
 13 to be totally clear.  
 14 MR. COLLER: Eight feet?  
 15 MR. REVUELTA: The worse that can happen is  
 16 that they buy the tree and they clip the  
 17 branches and the tree is there. So I would  
 18 make it eight feet. Eight feet will work on a  
 19 swale, should work on a driveway, should work  
 20 on a pedestrian, and that would be the second  
 21 on part of the --  
 22 MR. COLLER: Okay. So I think the  
 23 amendment would read, after the end of the  
 24 sentence, "Provided, however, consideration  
 25 should be given to the unique aesthetic of

1 the City, because anything on the swale has to  
 2 be approved by the City.  
 3 MR. REVUELTA: And that's what some of us  
 4 are saying, we're trusting Staff.  
 5 MR. BEHAR: If I'm in my property, inside  
 6 my property line, I could do whatever I want,  
 7 like you did. You put your yellow Tabebuias  
 8 and there is a -- but on the public  
 9 right-of-way, in the swale, it has to be  
 10 approved. So they have to give the  
 11 consideration to the existing trees.  
 12 MR. WITHERS: Which she says she does  
 13 anyway. You do that anyway, right?  
 14 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Right.  
 15 MR. WITHERS: So that's why I don't quite  
 16 understand what this -- I mean, it's your  
 17 amendment, but I just -- but I don't know what  
 18 that really does, because you're not saying you  
 19 still have to plant an Oak tree or you still  
 20 have to plant a tree that matches.  
 21 MR. BEHAR: But right now you don't have  
 22 any specifics. It's to their discretion,  
 23 right? Is that not the case? Up to now, it's  
 24 up to -- you know, and somebody could come in  
 25 next year and say, "You know what, I'm going to

1 allow yellow Tabebuias on the right-of-way,"  
 2 and I think this may accomplish it to be  
 3 specific.  
 4 MR. COLLER: The only thing is, I don't see  
 5 anything in the criteria that addresses the  
 6 concern that certain people -- that you all  
 7 believe that there are certain streets where,  
 8 really, it's Oaks and it's this height and it's  
 9 this height. So this directs Staff to say,  
 10 when you consider the tree, consider those  
 11 streets where the species and height  
 12 predominate. It doesn't mean that they're  
 13 mandated to do that, but it does require them  
 14 to consider it.  
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Which they do.  
 16 MS. CABRERA: Which she does, because she  
 17 makes sure that it's appropriate for the  
 18 street, that it works well with the other  
 19 species, but it does not mean that she wouldn't  
 20 allow something else.  
 21 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Compatible.  
 22 MR. COLLER: The other thing, of course,  
 23 now we're putting a minimum of eight feet from  
 24 the clear trunk height --  
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: -- requirement. Which

1 what you're referring to for trees?  
 2 MR. WITHERS: So the City would only have  
 3 to put a tree a minimum of eight feet, as well?  
 4 Is this applicable to City planting?  
 5 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Eight feet clear  
 6 trunk --  
 7 MR. WITHERS: Yeah.  
 8 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: -- means the foliage  
 9 is taller than that.  
 10 MS. CABRERA: Yeah. What he's saying is,  
 11 does this apply on a City planted tree, and,  
 12 yes, it would.  
 13 MR. BEHAR: Probably not. Probably not.  
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: All right. We have a  
 15 motion and a second. Let's go ahead and call  
 16 the roll, please.  
 17 THE SECRETARY: Chip Withers?  
 18 MR. WITHERS: No.  
 19 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?  
 20 MR. TORRE: Yes.  
 21 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?  
 22 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.  
 23 THE SECRETARY: Claudia Miro?  
 24 MS. MIRO: No.  
 25 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

1 means, if you take a tree that's eight feet,  
 2 and you just cut it up all of the way straight  
 3 up and plant the trunk, so that it will grow  
 4 later -- is that allowed? I'm just curious.  
 5 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: That would probably  
 6 kill the tree then, but -- it would be a dead  
 7 tree.  
 8 MR. REVUELTA: You would have to plant it  
 9 again.  
 10 MR. WITHERS: So does the City have to  
 11 abide by the same rule of eight-foot clear,  
 12 because the Florida One Standard is what, six  
 13 feet, on an Oak tree? When they rate their  
 14 trees, I think it's six feet, and I think the  
 15 City has the Florida One Standards requirement.  
 16 Do you know that?  
 17 MS. CABRERA: If you're over the street,  
 18 but if it's not over the street --  
 19 MR. WITHERS: I'm sorry?  
 20 MS. CABRERA: If over the street, but if  
 21 it's not over the street, there is no clearance  
 22 requirements.  
 23 MR. WITHERS: If it's in the swale, would  
 24 the City have to have them --  
 25 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Grade and standards is

1 MR. BEHAR: Yes.  
 2 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?  
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.  
 4 MR. BEHAR: Only took an hour and five  
 5 minutes.  
 6 MR. REVUELTA: Is four a recommendation?  
 7 MR. COLLER: Yes. The minimum vote for a  
 8 recommendation is four, which is what you have.  
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So we have a four to  
 10 two.  
 11 MR. REVUELTA: That's right.  
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.  
 13 MS. BELL-LLEWELLYN: Okay. Thank you.  
 14 MR. WITHERS: Thank you, Guys.  
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: The next item, please.  
 16 MR. COLLER: Item G-1, an Ordinance of the  
 17 City Commission of Coral Gables Florida  
 18 providing for a text amendment to the City of  
 19 Coral Gables Official Zoning Code by amending  
 20 Article 2, "Zoning Districts," Section 2-402,  
 21 "Zain/Friedman Miracle Mile Downtown District  
 22 Overlay" to promote quality design and to  
 23 reduce the size of property required for  
 24 Conditional Use review for parcels facing  
 25 Miracle Mile, providing for severability,