

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-6
July 11, 2023
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Melissa Castro

Commissioner Ariel Fernandez

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Parking Director, Kevin Kinney

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-6 [3:28 p.m.]

Discussion regarding remote parking
(Sponsored by Commissioner Fernandez)

Mayor Lago: Moving onto F-6.

Commissioner Fernandez: F-6 – The Planning and Zoning Board met recently about remote parking and the Chair brought up a really valid argument that I thought we should at least discuss up here. The question came up during the discussion about who keeps track of what parking spaces or what inventory of parking spaces there are, not just in the city’s inventory, but also in other buildings which are now leasing out parking spaces. And the recommendation that the Chair made was that maybe that the city should consider keeping inventory so that we didn’t have to rely on the information being provided by outside sources and we had a full inventory of what’s available. So, Director Kinney.

Parking Director Kinney: So, when we talk about remote parking and how that functions, there’s really three levels of parking supply. There are the spaces that we directly control and obviously if the Commission approves any kind of remote parking in those spaces, we sell monthly permits.

City Commission Meeting
July 11, 2023

So, we keep track, very good track of what the occupancies in our facilities are. Then there's the second level, similar to what we discussed earlier this morning where we have required a developer to develop additional spaces above what their zoning requirements are, and in some fashion they are dedicated to public use, that was the situation earlier this morning; and actually the agreement that you voted on this morning was the very first where we've allowed a developer to access and as we discussed earlier, our intention is to track those just as if they were permits that we were selling, so that we can keep track of how many of the existing 400 spaces have been dedicated and we know when we've reached capacity. Then the final set is when a developer speaks with another private property owner and says, oh, your garage is half empty, could I buy 50 spaces in your garage, so that I can build my building. In that situation when they make that proposal to the city, they actually have to go through a process to prove that there's 50 spaces available. And then annually in the zoning code, annually there's a requirement that they affirm, or they show or prove that those spaces are still available. We do not monitor occupancies in private facilities on a regular basis. We do require that any developer that tries to access somebody else's spaces to build something, come in and prove through a parking study that there are spaces available in the facility where they would like to lease them; and then there's a process to make sure they maintain that. I guess I would like kind of explore with the Chairman what his thoughts are, but like I said, we typically don't track the day-to-day occupancies in private facilities.

City Manager Iglesias: If I may say. I'm not sure the Chairman understands. The remote parking requires a covenant; covenants are now based on GIS, so if they would like to sell additional spaces like that, then before those are granted that building is checked to make sure that what parking has been granted prior for remote parking, and that's a covenant that everything else is going to be GIS based. So, our Parking Director can look at a parking study, our Zoning Official, our Planning Official can look at the parking requirements. There is a covenant in place that can be checked, and then at that time its determined whether that parking is legitimately remote parking or not. So, I think that even though we don't track them, when we need to track them, we can find out what it is.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, we have the data, basically.

City Manager Iglesias: We have a database, yes.

Mayor Lago: We've always had a database.

Parking Director Kinney: Yes.

Mayor Lago: For remote parking.

Parking Director Kinney: And there will be adjustments in this concept of remote parking as we move forward. Jennifer and I were kind of looking at the list. We don't even have a handful of

*City Commission Meeting
July 11, 2023*

remote parking agreements yet. So, we're kind of at the infancy stage and as its determined that we need more documentation or more control, those programs will be established.

City Manager Iglesias: And the fact that we have everything on GIS now moving to that platform makes the covenants very handy, not only for parking, but for Code Enforcement to determine what those buildings are responsible for and what has happened prior to what the current proposals are.

Commissioner Castro: Are these parking like not assigned parking. You could just – so yes, let's say 40 parking available, remote parking, is it a designated area. I know you said permit parking but is it an assigned spot or how does that work.

Parking Director Kinney: Typically, they are not assigned spots and even historically the city has not, we don't like assigned spots because they are really inefficient, so historically the city has not done assigned spots. There are some private facilities that have assigned spots, but usually to get an assigned spot, you pay a premium.

Commissioner Castro: So how are we controlling. I know that you said you had negotiated where they park. How are we controlling that?

Mayor Lago: First off, we had never been allowed to park in Merrick Park. So, we're starting the process for the first time in the existence of Merrick Park in 20 years. Every single time that we tried over the last ten years, they said no. So, this is the first time, we're going to be moving forward with this project addressing the issue in regard to Merrick Park, correct.

City Manager Iglesias: If I may say. We don't like assigned parking. Assigned parking generally leaves spots open and its very inefficient. So, you park where parking is available, and we try to stay away from assigned parking. It's a practice that was done before and its very inefficient.

Mayor Lago: The developer tried on multiple occasions, Kevin was involved, we've been negotiating this for years. We tried multiple times to have a designated area for their parking in the Merrick Park Garage and we said no, we said no. As they admitted on the dais right now when I asked them, how many times did you try? – 30 times; how many times were you effective? – obviously not, because I'm here and I'm not getting designated parking.

Parking Director Kinney: I think one of the issues, Commissioner, that you may be raising is, there was some question about taking up spaces, the preferred spaces for people that are going to shop at the Shops at Merrick Park, but the fact of the matter is the 400 spaces that are designated for the public are not in the primary garage that is for shoppers. They are in the residential building and the office building garages that have much less demand from Shops at Merrick Park. Although it doesn't have a space that says this is one of your 70 spaces, its in a facility, one of the four facilities that has less demand.

*City Commission Meeting
July 11, 2023*

City Manager Iglesias: And those facilities are in the north part of Merrick Park. The south part is where you have that huge garage that most shoppers use.

Mayor Lago: Any further questions?

Commissioner Fernandez: Thank you director.

Mayor Lago: Moving onto F-7.