

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting  
Agenda Item H-2  
December 8, 2015  
City Commission Chambers  
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Jim Cason  
Commissioner Pat Keon  
Commissioner Vince Lago  
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada  
Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark  
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen  
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman  
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia  
Public Safety Director, Frank Fernandez  
Deputy Chief of Fire, Mark de la Rosa**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Scott Tao, Architect, Lead Designer for Public Safety Buildings for AECOM**

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Agenda Item H-2 [Start: 1:06:15 p.m.]

A Resolution accepting staff's findings with regards to the renovation, replacement, or relocation of the Public Safety Building at 2801 Salzedo Street and authorizing the City Manager to pursue the best solution and return to the City Commission with an implementation plan for consideration at a future date.

Mayor Cason: Next will be Item H-2, which is about the public safety building.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We are very excited about this new initiative as well. Five different departments were involved in the formation of this recommendation, and so we are going to have the Director open it and then he'll call on the team that are coming with a very specific recommendation for you all to consider.

Mr. Fernandez: Mr. Mayor, members of the Commission, again we come before you with an exciting opportunity to address some of the issues that you talked about before and one of your key areas of concern has been the public safety building. You've heard before about the engineering study back in June and the issues with the structure. So today we'll like to present to you several different options for your consideration in terms of the relocation or the restructuring of the public safety building, we look for your direction. Before I pass it over to the committee, I do want to recognize several members of the committee that put this together. It was a long and very tedious process, but one that you are going to be very impressed with. I think will lead to a long legacy here in Coral Gables in terms of our public safety building, it's going to be a signature building for future generations to come. The committee was led by Deputy Chief Mark de la Rosa, who is our Deputy Fire Chief, co-chaired by Chief Bob Leman, and Major Terry Molina of the Police Department. From Public Works we had Mr. Ernesto Pino, Alejandro Gonzalez, from the automotive services, Leonard Roberts who had a great value to our committee, and outside one of our consultants that participated with us and gave us great guidance is Scott Tao from Doug McKinney, and also our Fire Chief and Police Chief Mark Stolzenberg and Chief Ed Hudak from the Police Department participated. With that it gives me great pleasure to bring up Chief de la Rosa, who will provide you with an overview of the program, and then pass it over to our next presenter. Chief.

Chief de la Rosa: Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. The following will be a brief summary of the status of the public safety building program up to this point. Following the June 16<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting an exploratory committee was assembled to study the options available to address the current public safety facility. The committee consisted as the director just stated of the Public Safety Director, Fire and Police Command Staff Members, as well as representatives from Public Works, Economic Development, and AECOM who served as our consultant. Committee members explored the following options: Number one, renovating and retrofitting the existing public safety building, demolishing the current property and rebuilding on site, and explore redevelopment opportunities that would maximize the equity of the current property, as well as construct a new facility on another location. The proposed facility would house Police and Fire Department administration, Fire Station Number One, 911 Emergency

Communications, the Emergency Operations Center, Human Resources, and Information Technology Department. A needs assessment was conducted with each of the representative departments in which stakeholders out of all levels were included to determine the current and future needs in terms of square footage required for the new facility. Based on that assessment, a study was conducted to identify both private and public owned sites that would accommodate a facility of approximately 110,000 square feet. The committee also developed a criterion to determine the appropriateness of sites that were going to be explored. That criterion consisted of six items. Number one, economic impact cost; number two, the building efficiencies of how that structure to be laid out in that proposed site and study the efficiencies and effectiveness of that structure to our operations. The urban impactor – how well it was compatible to the surrounding areas in the neighborhood. The project duration – how long a proposed project on this site take from development to turn key. The City presents – so how will it enhance the look of the City and its presents within our borders. And lastly, what impact of its location has to a fire station with regards to its response times. Based on that criterion, the committee has identified three suitable sites. Of those three sites each one presents more than one option. Mr. Scott Tall of AECOM will now present the site options the committee identified as suitable for a public safety building. AECOM is a renowned leader in design of public safety buildings and public safety training facilities. Locally they were the principal designers of the Miami-Dade Fire Department Training Facility. Overall they've designed over 100 facilities worldwide. It's important for me to note that during Mr. Tao's presentation that the structure that will be represented in each of the options is really just to consist as a mass study or as a placeholder on what a structure of the size that we are recommending would look on that particular site. So it should not be taken or represented as a rendering or as a suggestion of how we feel architecturally-wise how the building should look. So I present now Mr. Scott Tao.

Mr. Tao: Scott Tao, I'm an architect. I'm the lead designer for public safety buildings for AECOM nationwide. We are extremely proud to be here. We've done this many times, but being an office that has been in Coral Gables for over 80 years, it touches our capabilities, our heart, so we are very proud to be here. Anyways, we just wanted to do a quick presentation. Just to repeat what Chief de la Rosa had said, we are going to run a little bit on the options and show you what

we've been doing so far. Again, these are just mass studies, this is not to indicate a design, we just wanted to do a test. We've done several studies that we wanted to share with you and hopefully there is a recommendation and we move on. Just to repeat, again we are well known, I mean I know you guys probably heard of us, but we've done public safety buildings all over the country. Just to name a few: City of Miami Police, Miami-Dade Fire Training Facility, Miami Gardens, Key Biscayne Administration Building and Public Safety Complex, Sunny Isles, North Miami Beach, Town of Davie, that's just local, but we are also known for just finishing the Leon County Consolidated EOC and 911 Center. We also just finished the West Minister Public Safety Facility in California, the Los Angeles Police Administration Building. We are also currently working now remodeling the Coral Gables Fire Station 2 Trolley Building. So we are very proud of the work we have done and we feel like we would be a great asset for the City presenting this study. Just a few images I wanted to share with you guys. That's the City of Miami Police Building that we recently finished; and then the next one, another very iconic building, worldly known, the Miami-Dade Fire and Rescue Training Facility. So we wanted to go through this presentation really quick. You all know the existing building; the existing building was built in 1976, it was designed as a multi-faceted City Building. It used to be an administration building and now currently it holds Police Department, Fire Department, Fire Station, EOC, IT, Human Resources, Parking Department, Gables TV, and it also has a parking garage. So just a side note: In January 2015, the current building was estimated, appraised at \$19 million, so we just wanted to point that out. We all know why we are here. The building has quite a bit of limitations. The department has outgrown it, so there have been several studies that indicate that the building no longer functions as it should as it was planned in the 70's. So there are a lot of challenges; security hardening challenges, the building can't sustain future growth, it has considerable structural defects, inefficiency and department arrangement; a whole number of things that we feel that results on us looking at alternatives, so we just wanted to show you and point out some of these facts. So about two months ago, we entered into a programmatic study. We've interviewed Police Department and Fire Department employees and we wanted to come up with a program. We've identified that the program for the building is 110,000 square feet, after several interviews, and we also need a parking garage of 160 cars. I also wanted to point out that the building if designed should be a LEED building, should be a sustainable building, it

should be a CAT 5 (Category 5) building as well, should have a lot of efficiencies, should look into shared spaces between the departments, that's very important, and most important the building needs to be secured. So just to repeat, Chief de la Rosa's criteria, we've looked at parcels that were suitable to accommodate the complex facility. This is a very complex facility, it has a lot of components, so we want to make sure that the location and the site itself was suitable for that. We looked at publicly and private owned sites, we also identified that during that study we felt that the most preferred sites due to timing and budget constraints should be City owned properties. So we've identified three sites that we wanted to further study; Lot 6 and the area shows Lot 6, which is on the corner of Salzedo and Alcazar, that's currently a parking lot right now, a public parking lot. The existing Public Safety Building site, we also conducted the studies, we wanted to make sure that if that would be a suitable site how it would be developed; and the third option was a Lot on U.S.-1 and Riviera, which is where the Fire Station 2 sits right now. So those are our three Lots that we looked at and identified for future studies and conduct this analysis. So Lot 6 in Alcazar, we looked at the size, location, we studied the parameters, we studied the setbacks, all the limitations, and we've identified that a building on that property would be five floors, 110,000 square feet, three levels, and the parking garage would sit on – three levels of parking garage on one of the wings of the building. As you can see, it's an L-shaped building; this scheme takes the entire property, no setbacks, just the required, but again just takes the entire property. I want to show you a 3-D rendition of what the massing study is, because we are doing a test fit. This is a test fit just so we could see if the program fit on the site, and yes it does, as you can see, five floors, three levels of parking garage. So this was a test fit and we felt that this is a good site and we feel that the program fits on the site. So we've conducted this type of exercise on all of the other sites as well. So the other option that we looked at, because of the nature of Lot 6, it's an L-shape, we also thought of the possibility because there is a vacant lot right adjacent to it, perhaps there is an opportunity to add and square off the property. By squaring off the property we felt that it would allow us to design a much more efficient building, that's just an alternative to Lot 6, a thought because having that possibility allows us to have more efficient parking, more efficient adjacent departments, it allows us to have perhaps a civic plaza. The civic plaza could be important for the City, could be a place for memorial for fallen officers, a lot of opportunities for the City. So this is another

option that we looked at for Lot 6. This would be a 3-dimensional rendition of it, again just massing, perhaps a little bit taller building, just because we wanted to make sure that we leave a little bit more room space, seven levels, but this building could be configured in different variations just because it gives us a lot more flexibility. Just to move on. The second site that we looked at is Fire Station 2, that a 86,000 square foot property, we also looked at all the setbacks, all the requirements, and created mass renditions of what the 110,000 square foot would look on that property. Just a side note that I forgot to mention, we have color coded blue, red, and purple; red indicates Fire Department; blue, Police; and then the purple with our shared spaces, just a way to identify some of the spaces. They may vary eventually when the building gets designed, but those are just identified as square footage that it fits on the site. This one shows a long building and it would be a five level building. You can see the Fire Station detached, it has a training tower, just because the current training tower is on this site so we would have to do that there and there is the parking garage attached to it. So it's a five level building, but it's a long and narrow building. This building brings a lot of limitations just because of the narrow nature of it; circulation, adjacencies in departments and so forth. Just a separate but a different option on this site and I'll go quick, you probably are familiar. And then the third option on the existing site; the other way we could work on this site would be, and this is the current site, would be to build in phase. You would demolish the parking garage and the Fire Station, build on it and then building a new building, the existing...maintains under function and then you move everyone out and then demolish the existing building after that. So this project would have to be in phases and it would be much longer.

Commissioner Lago: Is that where your presentation, I think the contractor you hired stated 32 months?

Mr. Tao: 32 months...

Commissioner Lago: For the project, I'm asking.

Mr. Tao: Yes. Yes.

Commissioner Lago: OK.

Mr. Tao: So again, that's just a 3-dimensional rendition of how the building would look. We can make it work, but it's a much longer process, you have to do it in phases. We've looked at every possibility, this is just a few of the ideas; and we also looked at remodeling the existing building. It would cost \$17 million just to bring the building, the current building up to standards, that doesn't even address the future expansion, the functionality of the building, all the other trainings that we need for a modern public safety facility. So last but not least...

Commissioner Lago: Does that \$17 million taken into account have to move staff during that time period when the construction is underway interior renovation, exterior renovation?

Mr. Tao: Yes it does. Yes it does. So we did just a quick matrix on the sites and the comparisons based on the criteria that Chief de la Rosa mentioned. Green means good, yellow means OK, red we didn't feel like it was a good option. So it's just a graphic representation of what these options look like and based on economic impact, the project duration, urban impact, the building efficiency itself, the floor plate of how the building would fit on the site, the civic presents, and also location in terms of response for the building for response time. Just to point out a few things. Fire Station 2, we gave it, urban impact we gave it a red just because it would be a much larger building than what the buildings around are, so we feel that the building impact would be extremely large.

Commissioner Lago: You also potentially could have added a different box here, which is just the fact that if we were to entertain building this on the U.S.-1 site, the lag time would be significant when you are trying to deal with the issues in North Gables.

Mr. Tao: Yes.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Except Commissioner, I appreciate that question, but if we were to go with this scenario you would see that another follow up recommendation to us was to build a new Fire Station 1 to get it up north. Lot 6 gets us there, but if not we would need to come up with something further north.

Mayor Cason: Let me suggest in the interest of time since we've got a whole bunch of things for an hour and-a-half, this is basically a resolution authorizing the City Manager to look at those

solutions, scenarios that you had given us and come back to us with an implementation plan. So basically, I think we can probably...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We are actually recommending Lot 6. There are two different alternatives associated with Lot 6, but because of the exploration with the existing building, we want to get the equity out of that building and put it toward new construction, because Fire Station 2 since it's in the neighborhood there were some issues deficiencies in those two other locations. The best site that we are recommending today, we are asking you permission to study that location, Lot 6, both scenarios expanded and not, and then come back to you with details.

Commissioner Lago: I'm in favor. You are talking about two significant positives in reference to going with Lot 6, number one, the time is diminished for construction and design and soft requirements, and I also like the fact that we would be incurring less debt, instead of just spending \$17 million to reconstruct the existing building. Like the Manager mentioned, some sort of equity we can extract from the existing public safety building. I think that you incur zero debt, I imagine there will be some expenses, but it would be less significant than remodeling the existing facility.

Mr. Tao: Just wanted to clarify one thing. The \$17 million, you asked me the question, if it does include the relocation, it does not include the relocation.

Commissioner Lago: That's what I'm saying, so you are not even talking about, it's more than \$17 million, because you've got to house these individuals for at least a minimum a year or two years.

Mr. Tao: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: But also for Lot 6, its closer to North Gables and a shorter...

Commissioner Lago: That was my third point.

Mayor Cason: Shorter response times.



Commissioner Slesnick: Especially if we decide down the line to annex Little Gables, we are going to need something.

Commissioner Lago: Everything kind of seems to point to Lot 6 really being the best option for the City.

Mayor Cason: Alright, then let's memorialize that in a vote.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So moved.

Mayor Cason: Vice Mayor makes the motion.

Commissioner Slesnick: Second.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Slesnick seconds it. City Clerk

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Cason: Thank you very much.

[End: 1:29:25 p.m.]