

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-4
November 15, 2016
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 Works Director, Eduardo Santamaria

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-4 [4:47:54 p.m.]

Discussion regarding street lighting
(Sponsored by Commissioner Keon)

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon you had something on street lighting, F-4.

Commissioner Keon: Oh, I just wanted your thoughts on directing staff to begin to look at a process for being able to provide path lighting, it's the acorn lighting as opposed to street lighting, the roadway lighting, which can be paid through tax dollars or whatever else; the pathway lighting that are the acorn lights that so many people seem to want in their neighborhoods has been paid in the past through a special assessment and we have the means to do that; we have the means to do that, we can identify that. Usually we have done it through FPL, what I would like us to look at is, now we know since we initially did this years and years ago, there are a lot of other companies that have come along that will do lighting grids and will provide – we would like to do it with LED lights and it would become our lights, we would

assume the responsibility for them or whatever else, or make a decision as to whether we are better off to go with one of these contractors, like Horsepower, or anyone of the number of firms that do lighting in communities, and what would be the best route to go, what is the best at what cost to do an analysis of where would we go with a recommendation, so we can set a plan that if neighborhoods come in and would like to have that path lighting installed on their streets, we can tell them we know how much it is, we have a contractor or a couple contractors that are pre-certified to be able to go ahead and move and let people light their street. Many of our streets are exceedingly dark and a lot of it is when there is not enough light on a lot of streets, but there is also the tree canopy that exists block so much of the light from reaching the sidewalk or front yards or whatever else. So, I'd like to see us really reinvigorate that discussion, so that it is readily available for neighborhoods if they want to come in and also as to what percentage is on a block. How do we do it? - do it on block by block by basis or is it two blocks. I don't know, but I'd like you to make some recommendations as to, is it done by a block and how many people on the block need to have buy-in before you assess the whole block, at what percentage are the people, because you are going to assess them. We can assess them, we can put the assessment on the tax bills again, so once we do it, we can easily do it. The process of assessing them is already taken care of, the ability of how we collect the assessment is already taken care of, but how do we do this in a very orderly and organized way with whatever contractors you may determine and who will give us the best price, and do we want to use FPL or would we like to go to begin that move to other, to the private sector?

Mayor Cason: And the secondary aspect of that too is, we had a 50/50 in our original Neighborhood Renaissance Program plan with neighborhoods that wanted to have a more decorative light than the standard ones and we've never really moved on that, but that was money set aside under neighborhood for a 50/50 solution, so if you could weave that in as well.

Commissioner Keon: Do we have a pole that we kind of agreed on would be used in the neighborhood on streets?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Well, first of all, good afternoon again Commissioners and Mr. Mayor. There is a neighborhood enhancement program, I am not extremely familiar with it, but I have seen the thumbnail sketch and there are provisions for neighborhoods to get together to express their desire for pedestrian level lighting, there are certain standards that are involved here. We have our preferred Acorn lighting fixture, which is historical in nature and it is my understanding, and I believe I'm 100 percent correct in saying this, in that the City will share the cost of the lighting upgrades with the residents.

Mayor Cason: We have the same sort of thing we discussed a while back for sidewalk, for those with no sidewalk, same sort of a...

Public Works Director Santamaria: Correct its part of the same program.

Commissioner Keon: Right, but we have a contractor to do sidewalks; we have those already so we can call the contractor and they can go through and do sidewalks, that's why I'm asking for lighting. I think in the past we have partnered always with FPL and I don't know whether they've become our lights or they are FPL's lights, I don't know who the lights belong to.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Typically when FPL installs the light fixture it would become there's, it would be there's; however, there are contractors out there, one of which I know from my former experience as Director elsewhere that have contracts with the County that would be available to install, we could piggyback essentially if Procurement would allow it, to install the Acorn lighting and the lighting fixtures and lighting poles that are our standard here in the City. So that could be investigated.

Commissioner Keon: Yes, that's what I'm asking you to look into doing and to come back with some recommendation as to which way do we go, what offers us the better product with regard to cost, to maintenance, for everything.

Public Works Director Santamaria: I think that the current desire on the part of the Commission is for us to own the lights.

Commissioner Keon: To what?

Public Works Director Santamaria: To own the lights, for the City to own the lights, I believe that is the case, and so having said that what we are definitely willing to explore that. We would rather if it's not going to be FPL it would be someone else, but we'll hire a competent contractor, obviously that we'd be able to hire, and they would install the lighting fixtures for us.

Mayor Cason: What we need now is neighborhoods to come to us and say, we would like it, that's the part that's missing.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Correct.

Commissioner Keon: But I think if we announced to the neighborhoods that we have a program and its ready to go, it's like with the solar program, once the solar program was set people then took advantage of them. If we have a program set and we have a preferred contractor...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So the newsletter is still in production, so it's not too late for us to do a lighting in the neighborhoods article to get people to, neighbors to agree; and Vice Mayor Quesada asked what is an Acorn lighting, the best way of describing it is like our white-way lighting with the silver poles and the little round top without the adornment, and that has been very popular in the small residential neighborhoods.

Commissioner Keon: I think the lights at Ingraham Park, those are LED lights aren't they at Ingraham Park?- are they LED lights?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: The Acorn lights can do LED as well.

Commissioner Keon: Yes, I think so, but that's easy to see, but they are pedestrian level lighting.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We'll do an article in the upcoming newsletter.

Commissioner Keon: I want to write an article; maybe you can help me write an article.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: My pleasure.

Commissioner Keon: OK. So I ask for direction to...

Mayor Cason: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: So ordered.

Commissioner Keon: What would be an appropriate timeframe to ask you to come back is it like January, February, what do you think.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Well it's up to you.

Commissioner Keon: No. You tell me when you know you can do that job.

Public Works Director Santamaria: I think that January would be fine.

Commissioner Keon: OK. So at one meeting in January we'll set forward to come back. Thank you.

[End: 4:55:29 p.m.]