

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting  
Agenda Items I-1 thru I-4  
July 10, 2018  
City Commission Chambers  
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli  
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada  
Commissioner Pat Keon  
Commissioner Vince Lago  
Commissioner Michael Mena**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark  
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos  
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman  
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia  
Cultural Arts Specialist, Catherine Cathers**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**George Navarro  
Blessing Hancock, Artist  
Edwina Prime, Head of the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association**

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Agenda Items I-1 thru I-4 [11:23:10 a.m.]

**I-1:** A Resolution approving the concept of a work of public art by Blessing Hancock, in conjunction with the Gables Station mixed use project at 215 and 251 South Dixie Highway in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private development. (Unanimously recommended by the Arts Advisory Panel approval/denial vote: 6 to 0, and the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 7 to 0).

**I-2:** A Resolution approving the concept and donation for a work of public art by Blessing Hancock in connection with the Gables Station mixed use project at 215 and 251 South Dixie Highway in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private development. (Unanimously recommended by the Arts Advisory Panel approval/denial vote: 6 to 0 and the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 7 to 0).

**I-3:** A Resolution approving the concept for a work of public art, by Arturo Berned, in conjunction with the Gables Station mixed use project at 215 and 251

South Dixie Highway in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private development. (Unanimously recommended by the Arts Advisory Panel approval/denial vote: 6 to 0 and the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 7 to 0).

**I-4:** A Resolution approving the concept for a work of public art by Jaume Plensa in conjunction with the Paseo de la Riviera mixed use project at 1350 South Dixie Highway in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private development. (Unanimously recommended by the Arts Advisory Panel approval/denial vote: 6 to 0 and the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 7 to 0).

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The next one is at 10:15, I-1 through I-5.

City Attorney Ramos: These will lobby different votes. I can read them one-by-one into the record.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What?

City Attorney Ramos: I'm just going to read them sir. I-1 is a Resolution approving the concept of a work of public art by Blessing Hancock, in conjunction with the Gables Station mixed use project at 215 and 251 South Dixie Highway in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private developments.

Ms. Cathers: Good morning Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners. This morning we have actually five public art items and we are going to start off with the first two that are related.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can you hold it...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Mayor, I know that – we have been very timely with our young African leader initiative in terms of being there when the bus arrives, the bus is coming at 11:30, so they are going to exit, but I know on behalf of our visitors they appreciated the opportunity to observe the Commission in action, and again we look forward to the continued weeks, Tuesdays, with our new colleagues.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very, very much everybody. Thank you.

City Attorney Ramos: Catherine, 1, 2, and 3 are all Gables Station.

Ms. Cathers: Correct.

City Attorney Ramos: OK. So, I'll read the other two in a minute.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Wait a second.

City Attorney Ramos: OK. Since we are taking the three Gables Station items together, I'll read I-1 and I-2 – I-2 and I-3 also. I-2 is a Resolution approving the concept and donation for a work of public art by Blessing Hancock in connection with the Gables Station mixed use project at 215 and 251 South Dixie Highway in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private development. And I-3 is a Resolution approving the concept for a work of public art, by Arturo Berned, in conjunction with the Gables Station mixed use project at 215 and 251 South Dixie Highway in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private development.

Ms. Cathers: Thank you. So, the Art in Public Places requirement is for private development that's over \$1 million, they are required to pay into the Art in Public Places Fund, one percent of their construction cost and they may also have the option of requesting a waiver of paying that fee by incorporating art or donating art, incorporating that into the project. So, these first three items are asking for a waiver and the first two are for two pieces, are companion pieces by the same artist, Blessing Hancock.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What? I'm sorry, say that again.

Ms. Cathers: The first two items one and two, are by the same artist; they are companion pieces. One is a piece that will be sited on the property, one is a donation to the City, and you'll hear about how those pieces are working together. And, then the third one is a third piece on the property and I'm going to call up George Navarro, who is going to introduce the artist and speak about the first two items first, and then he'll address the second artwork – George.

Mr. Navarro: Good morning Mr. Mayor, Commissioners. If you could put up the PowerPoint for us, we have a PowerPoint presentation for you. We are very excited to be here this morning to present the artworks that we have selected for two of our projects, the Paseo de la Riviera Project and the Gables Station Project. We are going to be walking you through the artwork that we've selected for the Gables Station Project first. This project is the...project that was approved, it is a very unique project in that, with the support of this Commission, the developer has committed to constructing the portion of the Underline that abuts this project; and what we've done is we have selected three sculptures, three signature artworks that accentuates this project and they are located within the public open spaces. This project has over two acres of public plazas, public open spaces, green areas that are fully accessible to the public; and what we've done is in red, are the two sculptures that we've commissioned Ms. Blessing Hancock, who I will have the honor of introducing shortly. We are going to go ahead and put two sculptures; one is directly in the Underline. This is an area that has been selected by the County as a place for display of public art. And working with your Arts Advisory Panel, we went ahead and originally we had selected one sculpture by Ms. Hancock and that was going to be located within the central courtyard that's right in between the two residential buildings that's reflected with a large red dot on the PowerPoint, but that was going to be one sculpture. We've gone ahead and are working with your administration and your staff, we've now selected two complimentary art pieces, which are going to help to tie into these two open spaces and I will have Ms. Hancock walk you through her inspiration for these art pieces. The reason that we selected Ms. Hancock is not just because she is an internationally recognized artist and an award-winning artist and one of your

preapproved artist, but also because of her specialty in community engagement; and in working with the community to obtain their message and turn it into a living work of art. And, one of the things that this Commission wanted us to focus on as part of the approval process for the Gables Station Project was to work with the local Bahamian community in order to highlight the contribution that the Bahamian families have made to the City of Coral Gables. And, I would like to thank the Commission for helping putting us in contact with the members from the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association. I believe that you have several of them here this morning in support of the artwork that we selected. Ms. Hancock has been working with them hand-in-hand on the inspiration for this art piece. And as you know, this is a very historic neighborhood that worked with George Merrick and has a rich history in the development of the City of Coral Gables. So without further ado, I'd like to introduce you to Ms. Blessing Hancock, so she can let you know what she has designed for the project and walk you through her meetings and communications with the homeowners association.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Ms. Hancock: Well, thanks for inviting me here. This is an unusual experience for me actually to be part of the larger process of approving art. I'll be quick here. I just want to give you a little bit of background about myself and my process and past work and have been working on this specific project. My background is in sculpture and landscape architecture. I specialize in community engagement and that takes on a number of forms from workshops that are hands on to processes that involve collecting text and narrative and storytelling from the local community. Here are some examples that might relate to this specific project. I use a lot of text and language. I like an artwork that tells a story and I like that story to be local and from voices within your community. So, this is an approach I've taken throughout the world really. I have one of these actually in China recently and this is up in Maryland at a police station. So each work is site specific. It tells the story based on that specific community and they've always been very well received in that way, because the community comes back and they are able to point to things, they are able to bring their friends, they are able to talk about their contribution, and so, it's a longer lasting effect. I've worked with local poets to write poems that are incorporated into pieces. This is the two sculptures that we are working on now site specific. They are relating to each other; one larger piece and one smaller piece in the Underline.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Well, I don't see what that looks like.

Ms. Hancock: OK. I'll zoom in, in here. So, they are actually made out of stainless steel form.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's it as opposed to a little dot.

Ms. Hancock: There are two of them, an example of their location here. So, there is one larger one within the community and then one along the highline that's a little smaller.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's it.

Ms. Hancock: This is the larger piece and here they both are together. They won't be located this closely together, but they are made out of stainless steel and then they've got the text narrative that I've been developing with the local neighborhood; and then they've got color changing LED lights, so they will change color and they will have a sharp shadow projection on the surrounding surface, so that's kind of all part of the experience as you walk around them. So, during the day they'll be this satin finish stainless steel material. The last few months I've been collecting this narrative from the local community and I think there are a few women here that I've been working with here to support that. So it's been a wonderful process. There is a lot of information that I'm going through now, but this was the invitation I sent out working with the homeowners association, working with the women that have grown up and lived in this area for many, many generations. And, I sent out questionnaires and this is all information I received back about their local story. So, the next step from this process with your approval is to move onto narrowing the story down into something that we can add into the artwork and moving onto engineering phase. So this is all information I've collected. There was also a local documentary created by the developers of this project and I'm using the narrative text from that as well. So there is a lot to go through and peer down and put onto the artwork, but that's kind of the general direction we are taking.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Thank you very much. I'd like to hear from Edwina Prime, who is the head of the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association and we are honored with her presence here. Good morning – yes good morning still.

Ms. Prime: OK Mayor, members of the Commission, City Manager and staff. Gwen Reynolds continued the concept of preserving the history within the Golden Gates and McFarlane areas after attending a Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association meeting and speaking with area residents. As a result, the documentary, Graceful Voices, was produced and has been viewed nationwide. Artist Blessing Hancock has been selected to showcase the area further by developing expressions of life in the community as a permanent display. Neighborhood members have expressed their flaws and viewed probably forms of presentation and are eager to be actively involved in the process. Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you ma'am. Thank you very much, very interesting. George do you want to say something?

Mr. Navarro: So, as you saw, we had selected two concepts. Obviously, the narrative is still being derived based on our meetings and will continue to develop that. We are hoping to get the Commission's blessing on the concept, no pun intended, the blessing on the concept of Ms. Blessing Hancock so that we could go ahead and continue this dialogue with the community, and then once we have a final piece, we'll come back and present it to you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Do I hear a motion on I-1?

Commissioner Lago: Just have one quick question. I see that there is a LED component, electronic component obviously to it. What is the opinion of the developer in reference to whose going to be responsible for maintaining the stainless, obviously oxidize and you have one that's going to be on the actual property and the other one that's going to be, excuse me...

Mr. Navarro: The Underline.

Commissioner Lago: Yes, I apologize, the Underline.

Mr. Navarro: So that was one of the items that we worked hard with, with the Cultural Advisory Board. It's actually a very good process, because you go through all of these experts that are on these panels that come up with, that have experience with these materials. Also, one of the things that we've done is, as part of the development will work with your administration to come up with the maintenance agreement. We thought the easiest way was for the developer to maintain both of the sculptures and for us to have one component, since they are both inter-related for us to be able to synchronize the lighting system between both, so they can both have the same lighting; and we would have control of that and if there is a special event such as breast cancer awareness or any other event that the City wants and we could synchronize the colors for, we could go ahead and do that. The artwork is going to be designed with a panel that would be discreet where you could open up, access it for cleaning purposes, but also to be able to change that LED lightbulb once.

Commissioner Lago: I don't speak for the entire Commission, but if it was up to me, I want to limit the amount of colors that are used. I want to make it as classy and discreet as possible. I don't want it to be all different colors, red, pink, purple, that's my opinion.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I like purple.

[Laughter]

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Do you make a motion?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Real quick, because I was looking at some of your other work here, as I was going through it. Just want to make sure whatever text is on there is positive, because I saw some neighborhoods, there was like the word genocide or other kind of issues. If we can keep it a family neighborhood, I just want to make sure we can keep it positive. I hope that's the idea.

Mr. Navarro: Definitely.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I think I have a quote from Leona Cooper.

Commissioner Lago: That would be great.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: OK. The motion has been made and seconded. Will you call the roll on I-1 please?

City Clerk Foeman: Mr. Mayor you had a mover and a seconder, I didn't hear.

Commissioner Keon: I moved it.

Commissioner Mena: Second.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I-2.

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Commissioner Lago: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll please?

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. I-3 - public art by Arturo Berned in conjunction with Gables Station mixed use project.

Mr. Navarro: So, this is the other sculpture that we have chosen and this actually – put back up the PowerPoint for me. This sculpture – this is the one that's outlined in red. So, this project is unique in that it has several frontages. This is the most prominent frontage, it's on LeJeune, Ponce de Leon and South Dixie Highway, so it's a very busy intersection. This is an open courtyard where you have a lot of pedestrian and vehicle interaction. So, what we wanted to do was pick a very prominent art piece that we could put here and we chose Arturo Berned, who focuses on large scale abstract outdoor sculptures. He's not only an award-winning architect, but he's also a prized artist and I'd like to show you some of the examples. This is out of his Cabeza Collection and basically these are all cortense steel. This was the one – we had three different types of materials that we had discussed with your Art Advisory Panel. They thought that the cortense steel based on this environment provided that it's not located near any of the

landscaping, which we've gone ahead and designed this courtyard now to be free of any kind of sprinklers that might impact this art piece, we've gone ahead and selected this material and we've been working with Arturo Berned and we actually – these are some examples of other art pieces from this collection. As you can see, they are very beautiful and they are very unique in their design and Arturo Berned is right now going ahead and he's designing this art piece for the installation at the corner. This is a structure that's twelve feet high. We had three different heights that we presented to the Cultural Advisory...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: How high is it, I'm sorry.

Commissioner Lago: Twelve feet.

Mr. Navarro: Twelve feet in height, so the other ones were nine and six feet; and the Cultural Advisory Panel thought that because you are going to be having a lot of pedestrian traffic and also vehicle traffic that this would be something that the larger sculpture in this wide open space would fit the space better. So, we've gone ahead and this is the art piece that we are going to Commission.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Are there any comments or do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Keon: No. I'll move it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll please.

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Paint it purple and pink.

Mr. Navarro: One of the things we are going to do, we are also going to put some up lighting there, so it can be appreciated at night as well.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Item I-4.

City Attorney Ramos: Item I-4 is a Resolution approving the concept for a work of public art by Jaime Plensa in conjunction with the Paseo de la Riviera mixed use project at 1350 South Dixie



Highway in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private development.

Mr. Navarro: So this is the Paseo de la Riviera Project. As this Commission may recall, this project has a large paseo. In the middle it's an open air courtyard, it's about the size of a football field and it has shops and restaurants and it has a hotel and some residential units. We wanted to create an area where the public could appreciate this artwork and what we've done is we've decided to put the artwork right at the, I apologize here, right at the beginning of the paseo. We set it back slightly from U.S.-1, just to protect it from noise, debris and vehicle traffic and things that can damage the artwork. We have a fountain that's kind of creating the entrance to the paseo and right behind that we are going to have the artwork. The artwork that we've chosen is called "Storm." It's been displayed all over the world, there are several different pieces of this and I think I have a photo of – This is the artwork that we are going to be Commissioning. It is going to be put on top of a stone in order to elevate it from the ground. We thought that would be better. There were some concerns regarding maintenance issues and issues of debris. So, one of the things that the artist is working on is to create a little trap door, something that you won't be able to notice. You can go in and pick up anything that comes in out of it. It's also going to allow with ease of maintenance and then we've created a little river mote that goes around this in order to try to deter people from climbing onto these sculptures. These are sculptures that are in parks all over the world and people tend to want to take photographs with them, so we've put discreet "Do not touch" signs and we are going to have that little mote. So hopefully deter people from coming onto them. And one of the things, you know these projects are being developed by the same developer. We are trying – these artworks have been selected in order to create kind of like an art walk and an area where people will go and hopefully visit all of these different artworks throughout the City, which I know the City has done a great job with Art Basel and bringing art back to the Gables, so we are hopefully going to continue that trend.

Commissioner Lago: This artist, just so you know, during this Art Basel season he had one of his sculptures installed at the PAM and it's currently there in the terrace; and if you also go to Millennium Park in Chicago he has one of his sculptures installed, which has a water feature. It's pretty significant in that park. It's very nice.

Mr. Navarro: Thank you. The Art Advisory Panel was very happy that we selected this artist.

Commissioner Lago: That's great – great work.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second is Commissioner Keon, will you call the roll please?

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

[End: 11:44:48 a.m.]