

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item J-5
February 12, 2019
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

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

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Anthony De Yurre

Agenda Item J-5 [0:00:00 p.m.]

A Resolution continuing the presentation and hearing and extending negotiations from the current February 13, 2019 deadline to March 13, 2019, in order for staff to continue working toward reaching an agreement with Coral Gables City Center, LLC (CGCC) for the redevelopment of City-Owned Municipal Parking Garages 1 and 4, located at 245 and 385 Andalusia Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright, J-5. Thank you.

City Attorney Ramos: J-5 is a resolution continuing the presentation and hearing and extending negotiations from the current February 13, 2019 deadline to March 13, 2019, in order for staff to

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Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Quesada: So moved.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second?

Commissioner Mena: Second.

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

Commissioner Quesada: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes, but -- do we have time for remarks after this is over?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Vice Mayor Lago: I don't have any issue with that.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: L-1.

Commissioner Mena: I think she wanted to...

City Attorney Ramos: L-1 is a resolution...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Oh, I'm sorry.

City Attorney Ramos: Confirming the nomination...

Commissioner Keon: You know, I think that if we're going to -- if you're going to allow them to continue this, it's because they are looking for some direction because they've been negotiating for two years and we haven't gotten to where we need to be in order to have four votes to allow it to happen. I really -- I think you -- you know, you -- I feel like I owe it to you to tell you where I stand on this so that you don't, you know, rely on having those votes. Now, I don't know what your discussions are with anybody else, but you know, to me, this is -- the purpose of this project was to provide parking infrastructure for the downtown. That was the whole purpose of this project. So, when we -- it has to have 750 spaces. I don't think it was appropriate that, at the request of a prior City Manager, those parcels were up zoned to what they are for the purpose of being able to find -- and the assumption at that time when they were was that it would be a parking garage that was free to the City with the amount of cars. So, it seems that, you know, to have something that is acceptable massing, acceptable height, acceptable number of parking spaces, I have -- I truly don't believe you can do that for free. So, I don't know how you can do that. So, I want you to know publicly that I am inclined to not support this. Since there's nothing before us, I can't tell you yes or no, but I think it's important that you know that I am not inclined to support this because I just don't think you can fit all of that in into a scale that is appropriate for a 60-foot right-of-way on a street to have that long, massive a structure. I just want you to -- I want that to be clear to you coming in, but you have -- that's only one out of five. So, you -- I want you to go forward knowing.

Commissioner Mena: I had...

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Mena: Did you want to say something? I was going to say something. I had intended to make a friendly amendment, but I don't know how we're going to deal with it. Staff had asked if we could ask that you all -- and I'm sure you'll cooperate -- will submit whatever the plan is going to be by February 26, so that gives you, you know, two weeks so that staff has enough time to review it, render a professional opinion to us that we can rely on and digest before that March 13 date. So, do you think your client -- is that okay with -- you think that's okay for you and your client?

Anthony De Yurre: Really, the only caveat is subject to the schedule of the Commissioners and, you know, what availability might be so that they can review the updated options that we have. again, I believe that City Manager Iglesia's first month as manager was October 1 and we've really gone into hyper speed on trying to satisfy the requests that remain have always been the request, but trying to make them as concrete as possible and balance them. So, Thanksgiving, New Year's and Christmas in between, we're here and looking forward to wrap it up -- and I think we've accomplished a lot and the City Manager can obviously comment on that. But you know, subject to the Commission being available, which I think everybody wants to see this come to its conclusion, hopefully, and a solution, then, yeah, two weeks would be sufficient for us to provide to staff.

Commissioner Keon: I would also like that we would hold -- to the Manager I'd like to schedule a sunshine meeting the week before the Commission meeting that we can ask you every question I have to ask before that meeting, like we have done in the past.

City Manager Iglesias: We will do that, Commissioner.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

City Attorney Ramos: The concern with not having it by the 25th is that we're going to end up in another continuance situation because staff has not prepared. So, that's really where it...

Commissioner Mena: Yeah, I don't think...

Mr. De Yurre: How long does that give the staff? How long does that give staff? What is it, the 12th to the 25th?

Commissioner Mena: That gives staff about two weeks.

City Attorney Ramos: The 12th is not the deadline. The deadline for Commission is the 7th.

Mr. De Yurre: Prior, right. I got it. Sorry, sorry.

Vice Mayor Lago: So, I mean, I'm more than willing, through the Mayor...

Commissioner Mena: I just want to have a process in place so that we're not back here again deferring...

City Attorney Ramos: Correct.

Vice Mayor Lago: I'm ready. Like I said...

Commissioner Mena: So, let's agree on what that process is so that everybody knows what it is and we'll be back here on the date of that Commission meeting to make a final decision.

Mr. De Yurre: And as long -- you know, I think that...

Commissioner Mena: Sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt.

Mr. De Yurre: I think that the Commissioners -- Commissioner Keon, Vice Mayor Lago, Mayor Valdes-Fauli, Commissioner Mena, Commissioner Quesada, that everybody's trying to figure out a solution that works for the City to save the City the money they would have to come out of pocket to deal with the garage. And we just want to have the opportunity to sit down with each one of you to get your input and pick the best version that provides the best solution for the City and put it forward to staff for their review and get in front of you again on the 12th. And then, ultimately, the decision can be made.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What is your recommendation regarding the Sunshine meeting and then bringing it in terms of time?

City Attorney Ramos: I would ask the Commission to require that the materials be submitted by Monday, February 25. And then the Sunshine meeting, as Commissioner Keon requested, could be on March 8, which is a Friday.

Vice Mayor Lago: So, this would be our third Sunshine meeting to discuss the project, and then that would give staff a window of potentially 10 days prior to the Commission meeting. Am I correct?

City Attorney Ramos: Correct.

Vice Mayor Lago: Nine?

City Attorney Ramos: Well, it would give...

Vice Mayor Lago: So, just tell me. I want to be very clear.

Mr. De Yurre: It depends on staff, right.

Vice Mayor Lago: I want the panel of lawyers on the left-hand side here to guide this discussion because I want to be very, very methodical moving forward. I don't want there to be any window where, you know, a statement could be stated that we didn't provide enough time to review on behalf of the applicant, on behalf of staff and on behalf of this Commission.

Commissioner Mena: Right.

Vice Mayor Lago: I'm ready to make a decision on this project and I want to see this -- I want to see us move on to the next chapter, whatever that chapter may be. I think that this is becoming a costly endeavor on behalf of the City and on behalf of the applicant already. And I think that we need to sit down and vote this up or down. It's gotten to that point. We're here. So, if you want to have this Sunshine meeting, I'll attend the third Sunshine meeting. The last one Commissioner Keon called, I went to it. And I think Commissioner Mena and Commissioner Keon were gracious enough to come to the one that I called before. We can have a third one. It's not a problem. But I just don't want to -- I don't want to have this back and forth anymore.

Commissioner Keon: I would...

Vice Mayor Lago: I don't think it's in the best interest of the City and I just think it shines the City in a bad light because, you know, they say that we're not playing fair, that everything is not on the up and up. And I don't want...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's the perception.

Vice Mayor Lago: And I don't want to hear that anymore. I don't want that perception of the City because...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's the perception.

Vice Mayor Lago: You know, I don't want to seem as if we're dragging this on.

Mr. De Yurre: I will say, for the record, it was almost 20 years ago to this day when then-Mayor Valdes-Fauli -- again, Mayor Valdes-Fauli signed the resolution that authorized the original RFP. It was actually February 22, 1998. And so, it's in recognition of the efforts that have gone on for now two decades to try to fix these garages. And I can tell you, you've gotten varying degrees of different proposals for this over the 20 years. But I think that I can state uncategorically and I would challenge anyone to state otherwise that the current applicant has put forth a -- the most significant and serious effort to try to find a solution for the City that is palatable and saves the citizens, including myself, the need to expand. I believe it's a 40 -- close to a \$40 million price tag for the development of its own garage. It's much needed.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Madam City Attorney, will you go through the schedule again, the timetable?

City Attorney Ramos: Yes. We would be adding to that previous motion that the deadline to submit the project or projects from the developer would be February 25.

Commissioner Keon: Monday.

City Attorney Ramos: And that's a Monday. And a Sunshine meeting would be held on March 8, which is the Friday before the Commission meeting.

Vice Mayor Lago: I won't be here. I'll be out of town.

Commissioner Keon: When are you back in town?

Vice Mayor Lago: The 8th. I get back on that Sunday.

City Attorney Ramos: When do you leave?

Commissioner Keon: Are you gone for that week?

Vice Mayor Lago: When do I leave? I leave Thursday.

City Attorney Ramos: So, it couldn't be on the 7th?

Vice Mayor Lago: Thursday morning.

City Attorney Ramos: No.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Could we do it on Wednesday?

Commissioner Mena: Wednesday?

Vice Mayor Lago: Huh?

Commissioner Mena: Maybe Wednesday?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Wednesday.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yeah, yeah, Wednesday's perfect. I could do Wednesday.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Mena: How does that...

Commissioner Keon: Wednesday's okay.

Commissioner Mena: How does that work with the timing?

Commissioner Keon: It gives them a week and a half.

City Attorney Ramos: So, the Sunshine meeting on Wednesday...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Attorney Ramos: The 6th.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Vice Mayor Lago: And again, if it's a problem for -- I know...

Commissioner Mena: No, no, no, no.

Vice Mayor Lago: I know Commissioner Quesada travels a lot...

Commissioner Mena: Does that give you enough time?

Vice Mayor Lago: For work. If it's an issue...

City Manager Iglesias: We'll have to make it (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Lago: I can -- by the way, I can call in. I can call in as long as they give me a package.

Okay, no, no. Just want to make sure.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Vice Mayor Lago: I don't want to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. So, that's acceptable to you, alright?

Mr. De Yurre: Thank you very much.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

Mr. De Yurre: Thank you, Commissioner.