

# CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

## Economic Development Board Meeting Meeting Minutes

Wednesday | April 7, 2021 | 8:00 a.m.  
Location: Zoom and City Hall Commission Chambers  
405 Biltmore Way, 2nd floor, Coral Gables, FL 33134

EDB MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTING ENTITY
	'21	'21	'21	'21	'21	'21	'21	'21	'21	'21	'21	'21	
Julio Grabiell	Z	Z	Z	P									Mayor Raúl Valdés-Fauli
Olga Ramudo, Chair	P	E	Z	P									Commissioner Michael Mena
Stuart McGregor	Z	E	Z	P									Commissioner Patricia Keon
Bradley Barreto	P	Z	-	-									Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Manuel Niebla	P	Z	Z	P									Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.
Barbara Tria	-	Z	Z	P									City Manager Peter Iglesias
Thad Adams	-	-	Z	P									Chamber of Commerce

A=Absent E=Excused Absence P=Present X=No Meeting Ph=Present by Phone Z=Zoom - =Former Board Member

### Staff and Guests:

Julian H. Perez, AICP, CFM, Director, Economic Development Department  
 Belkys Perez, Assistant Director, Economic Development Department  
 Zeida Sardiñas, Asset Manager, Economic Development Department  
 Francesca Valdes, Business Development Coordinator, Economic Development Department  
 Leticia Perez, International Business Development Coordinator, Economic Development Department  
 Yenis Gomez, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development Department  
 Kevin Kinney, Director, Parking Department

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Ms. Ramudo brought the meeting to order at 8:28 a.m.

- 1. Review and approval of January 6, 2021, Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes.**  
 Ms. Tria made a motion to approve the meeting minutes and Mr. Grabiell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. There was no discussion regarding the minutes.
  
- 2. Review and approval of February 3, 2021, Economic Development Board Meeting Summary.**  
 Ms. Tria made a motion to approve the summary with discussed corrections and Mr. Niebla seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
  
- 3. Review and approval of March 3, 2021, Economic Development Board Meeting Summary.**  
 Mr. Grabiell made a motion to approve the summary and Ms. Tria seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. There was no discussion regarding the summary.

#### **4. Parking - Update**

Mr. Kinney updated Board members on the status of the parking issues during the pandemic.

The City of Coral Gables had a healthy transit system pre-pandemic. Historically, there are a little over 1 million passengers a year using the trolleys. In April 2020, there was a significant decline with less than 10,000 passengers. However, since April 2020 we have slowly seen an increase with about nearly 60,000 passengers in March 2021. A normal healthy ridership is about 90,000 in transit. The freebie ridership peak was 8,000 to 10,000 passengers a month. In April 2020, there were less than 1,000 increasing monthly with 4,200 passengers in March 2021 which is still about half of what is normally expected.

The most popular places to park are the on-street parking spaces. In February 2020, the City of Coral Gables was hitting record highs. In a three (3)- week span, we had approximately \$225,000 per week in parking transactions. In April 2020, the worst week was \$8,900. The on-street parking has since recovered.

#### **5. Asset Management Report**

*Proposed Sale of City-owned Property at 350 Greco Avenue – Parking Lot 31.*

Ms. Sardiñas presented the proposed Sale of City Parking Lot #31. On May 14, 2019, pursuant to Resolution 2019-103, the City Commission directed the City Manager to evaluate options for the sale of the Property. The City was approached by owner/principals from JRFQ Holdings, LLC and the two adjacent lots to the south of the Property who expressed an interest to purchase the Property from the City, at which time, the City contracted for an appraisal of the property. The City provided the Purchaser with a zoning verification letter from the City's Planning and Zoning Department regarding the adjacent lots. In addition, a second zoning verification was issued for the City-owned Property. The Purchaser submitted a Purchase and Sale Agreement to the City which became effective on February 5, 2021. The City then contracted for second appraisal for the Property.

#### **Proposed Terms:**

- Purchase Price: \$3,500,000.
- Per Sq. Ft Price: \$262.31.
- The Purchaser is purchasing the Property to further improve same with the building of an overall project (the "Purchaser's Improvements") that will be developed using the two adjacent lots to the south of the Property which will include a parking garage.
- The future overall project's garage will be controlled solely by the Purchaser, who will charge parking fees, with parking revenues being the sole property of the Purchaser.
- As additional consideration, the Purchaser's Improvements will include thirty-four (34) parking spaces that will always be accessible to the public and be located outside of any restricted parking areas within the garage.
- The required parking spaces needed to meet the City of Coral Gables' project approval for the Purchaser's Improvements shall include the thirty-four (34) spaces.
- The Seller will not be required to pay any fees for the use and enjoyment of the public spaces, pursuant to Section 4 of the PSA.

- The Purchaser and Seller will enter into a Management Agreement for the surface parking lot on or after the Closing Date through the date on which construction begins on the Purchaser's Improvements.
- The parking fees/revenues derived during that period will be equally divided between the Purchaser and the Seller.
- The Purchaser provided a \$100,000 deposit.
- There was no Broker involvement.
- The Sale is contingent on City Commission approval.
- The closing will occur fifteen (15) days after City Commission approval.

In accordance with Section 2-2014 of the Procurement Code, two real estate appraisals were conducted with regard to the Property. The appraisals were done by MAI certified appraisers' Waronker & Rosen, Inc. and Quinlivan Appraisal, PA.

Summary of appraisals are as follows:

Date	Appraiser	SF	Appraised Value
7/13/20	Waronker & Rosen, Inc.	13,343	\$3,350,000
2/10/21	Quinlivan Appraisal, PA	13,343	\$3,525,000

The Board was provided the required questions with suggested answers:

1. Is the proposed use in keeping with the city goals and objectives?

The proposed use/development project has not been fully determined but the sale and subsequent development of the Property would provide the opportunity for the property to become part of an overall high-quality project in a highly visible location, in close proximity to major streets such as LeJeune Road, Bird Road, and Ponce de Leon Boulevard, well within an area that the City has an interest in activating. As such, the sale will be consistent with the city's goals and objectives.

Mr. Grabieli agreed that Le Jeune Road in that area needs a good quality development to enhance the entrance to the Gables from the south. He hopes that landscaping improvements would be included and similar to the quality of landscaping found just to the north of the property at the entrance of the Shops at Merrick Park. Ms. Tria had some questions and comments regarding the packet that was provided to the Board. She asked the City to clear up a discrepancy in the email listed on the Purchase and Sale Agreement for the purpose of providing notices. Ms. Tria also commented on the high-quality project undertaken by the adjacent property owners in a previous project. She would expect a similar quality and welcomed a unified design on that block fronting Le Jeune. Ms. Sardinias mentioned Jose Boschetti and Lester Garcia as the developers that staff has met with on this project.

2. What is the economic impact to the city including, i.e. is the proposed use in keeping with a public purpose and community needs, such as expanding the city's revenue base, reducing city costs, creating jobs, creating a significant revenue stream, and improving the community's overall quality of life?

The sale at \$3,500,000 to the Purchaser would generate a higher rate of return than if it is continued to be operated as a surface parking lot with thirty-three (33) metered spaces. The surface parking lot is mainly used by patrons of the restaurant across the street and its current revenue and usage outside of restaurant patrons is not very high. The Purchaser is purchasing the Property to further improve it with the assemblage of the two (2) lots adjacent to the South of the Property. The Purchaser intends for the overall project to include a parking garage which will include thirty-four (34) parking spaces which will be accessible to the public at all times and located outside of any restricted parking areas within the development project's garage. This will not only ensure that parking continues to be available to service the area, but it will also help activate the area in an economically viable manner for existing businesses as well as for those that will be included in the project.

Ms. Tria had several questions regarding the appraisals. She referenced a March 2020 appraisal that was not included in the packet. She also stated that the Quinlivan appraisal was derived through an open market assessment. Ms. Sardinias explained that the original Waronker & Rosen appraisal from March 2020 had incorrect zoning information. The City's Planning and Zoning Department issued zoning verification letters for both the adjacent lots and the City's parking lot to clarify the zoning information. Both zoning verification letters were provided to Waronker & Rosen, and Quinlivan. The instructions to both appraisers included the information that the owner of the two adjacent lots is the proposed purchaser.

3. Are there alternatives available for the proposed disposition, including assembly of adjacent properties and can the project be accomplished under a private ownership assembly?

The Purchaser who is purchasing the Property is a private entity who is looking to further improve the Property with the assemblage of the two (2) lots adjacent to the South of the Property. The compatibility of the project with the surrounding neighborhood will be further evaluated during the planning and zoning review process and the project will be subject to City Commission approval as well.

Sardinias explained how the 34 parking spaces will be owned by the purchaser and the revenue generated by the spaces will remain with the purchaser; however, the spaces will continue to be available to the public at all times. Ms. Ramudo asked if the 34 parking spaces will be separate from the rest of the parking spaces in the building. Ms. Sardinias confirmed that they will be non-restricted and available to the public at all times. Mr. Kinney expressed the added value of the 34 public parking spaces for the patrons of the businesses across the street which currently use the spaces. Mr. Niebla and Mr. Adams asked the City to make sure the rates of those 34 parking spaces reflect rates similar to those in city-owned parking lots since they will be open and used by the public.

The board agreed with the provided responses with slight modifications (already reflected in the three answers provided above).

**A motion was made by Mr. Grabiell to approve the sale of the City-owned Property located at 350 Greco Avenue, Parking Lot 31 for \$3,500,000 and the responses to the required questions. The motion was seconded by Mr. Niebla. The motion was voted upon and adopted unanimously.**

**6. Retail Update**

Ms. Valdes updated Board members with the latest restaurants and retail new openings in the Downtown area. Additionally, we will be holding a Retail Strategy Workshop on May 5, 2021.

**7. Business Tax License Report**

Ms. Valdes updated Board members of the new and upcoming businesses in Coral Gables.

**8. Open Discussion**

In closing, Mr. Niebla suggested that at a future meeting, the Department explain what the city's strategy and thought process is for acquiring so much land, which often remains underutilized.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Yenisis Gomez, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development Department.