

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-1
March 14, 2017
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 Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-1[3:47:07 p.m.]

Discussion regarding the Coco Plum Bridge Project
(Sponsored by Commissioner Keon)

Mayor Cason: Now we want to have a discussion of where we are or not on the Coco Plum bridge. Any information you can give to us and the public as to the facts as to state of the bridge and what the process is ahead. So Mr. Iglesias...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Good afternoon Mayor. We have the County here today, we have Frank ____ who is the Design Engineer and Deputy Director for Dade County Department of Transportation and he will provide us with some of the information. We've already received the report on the bridge and we are working with them closely and I would like to...

Frank: Good afternoon. I came here pretty much mostly to answer some of the questions you may have, but in a nutshell, the bridge is a 1943 bridge, some of the railings you are going to see are beams with tubes are substandard, so part of the project we are looking at right now is probably upgrading some of the stuff and also retrofitting the superstructure and looking at what's best moving forward. Couple of thing also I want to mention is the timeline on this. This

is work on the very early stage of development, so we are looking at all the technical documents, the bridge inspection reports, the plans. So some of the meetings we have with the City of Coral Gables has been to try to work together to find out exactly aesthetic appeal, exactly how we are going to move forward.

Mayor Cason: So it's not like the bridge is going to fall down, its old, 75 years old or something like that.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Yes, 75 years old.

Mayor Cason: Do we know the status or the condition of the pillars into the bedrock underneath that are underwater, are they solid? Do we have any way of knowing for sure?

Frank: The bridge is not posted right now at all, and as far as the pillar's condition on the inspection report, they show they are in good condition. We are still going to assess all the reports anyway.

Mayor Cason: So is the question then of renovation, repair of rather than replacement of?- or you are not sure yet.

Frank: We are obviously looking at the alternative for construction perspective right now, not to impact the travelling public too much, and see how we can accommodate all of the issues.

Mayor Cason: And this is going to be paid – is this a funding from FDOT?- the County?- who?

Frank: The County.

Mayor Cason: So it's County money, County bridge, and...

Commissioner Keon: Is there federal dollars involved at all?- it's all just County dollars?

Frank: Correct, that's right.

Mayor Cason: Does this mean the bridge most obsolete in Coral Gables or are there others, is this the worst of the many bridges in Coral Gables, do you know?

Frank: No.

Mayor Cason: I was just wondering if you had a list and sort of picking the worst of the bridges and started with this one.

Frank: No, it's not so much – it's not so much that there is a worst or bad list, its each bridge is going to have some level of periodic maintenance that need to be looked at, and just can't be ignored, because then it turns into worst and worst; and then if you look at the progression of deterioration it's better to catch something very early, it's a lot cheaper to repair it, than it is if you let it linger on, and then all of a sudden the cost will go exponential on you.

Mayor Cason: So it could be as you go forward as simple as, not simple but replacing railings and modernizing the safety or even more complex.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I don't think we want to get into this. It's just being analyzed right now and I think it's premature to get into these alternatives and we don't want to state something that I think may not happen, but I would like, Frank if you could please talk about our involvement on the committee and the aesthetic issue and so forth...

Frank: So in the initial meeting what we were looking to do is, it's going to be probably design-build package, which means the contractor will be aggraded and producing a design. As part of the design criteria we are going to give them aesthetic points, so they are going to be submitting renderings to us and then as part – some of the meetings we have with Coral Gables because on the selection committee we are going to use a Coral Gables representative on the selection committee with us. The other thing we are looking at maybe is, as part of the grading criteria, we are going to give them construction durations, and they'll be able to get technical points based on their ability to expedite the construction process, or also if they have maybe alternate construction methods.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: We will be involved and we'll have a seat at the table, they are also looking at the planning aspects and the historical and some of the issues in Coral Gables, so we don't get just a regular guardrail, and maybe some of the ones that you've used in the causeway, some architectural features and they will look at the fact during design-build of how fast the contractor and design-build team work. So all those issues are being addressed.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon.

Commissioner Keon: We asked you to come to talk to us about it because there seems to be, there was one article that was written in the Miami Herald that indicated that the plan was to replace the bridge and that it was a two year project, so there would be no bridge for two years and it created a lot of concern among people, and we were asking you to come so that we can

disseminate the correct information. If not for the Miami Herald, although usually the reporter will watch it, so hopefully he'll write on it, if he doesn't it we will at least be able to disseminate from the City what the appropriate, or what the actual facts are related to this issue. I think one of – and you used terms as engineers that have connotation to the lay person that's very different than what it means for you; and I spoke to Mr. Iglesias about it, this issue of design-build, and so it seems to me what you are saying is design-build means whatever the remediation that needs to be done is design-build. It doesn't mean that, if its design-build it doesn't mean replace; design-build means the scope of work to be done on this project. So once you determine the scope of work on the project then that's when it goes, they do the design and you design, build, or construct from there.

Frank: Exactly.

Commissioner Keon: OK. That particular term to the public tends to be equated with replacement, it does. It tends to be equated with replacement, so I would just like it to be clear that it is a scope of work. Suppose if you really find that the bridge is just incapable of continuing on, yes replacement, but it can just be a resurfacing, changing of the guardrails, it's a number of issues that it could be; and we will have – so once we know what the scope of work is, then you will be able to define a timeline.

Frank: Correct.

Commissioner Keon: A period of time that it would be done.

Frank: And I can tell you right now, you are looking at – we are going to do a lot of internal work with the City and probably nothing is going to come out until July as an advertisement. So we are going to even start our process in July and submittals have got to come in, there is a cone of silence, a selection is made, and then eventually we have an award.

Mayor Cason: Same as process are here on out – RFP, RFQ.

Commissioner Keon: Sometime in July you'll have the scope of work, is that right?

Frank: Correct.

Commissioner Keon: OK. So your plan is to have the scope of work that will be done by July and at that point you'll go out for an RFP for that scope of work.

Frank: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: And then once you award the contract that will tell you the timeline.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: It will be a design-build contract for that scope of work.

Mayor Cason: And you assume you would have enough money regardless of whatever has to be done to do it. Even the worst case whatever that happens to be, you have the funding.

Frank: We'll deal with that as we develop the scope we look at the magnitude of what the work will entail and we start looking at our funding also.

Mayor Cason: OK.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you very, very much for coming from County Hall for working with us.

Mayor Cason: Nothing like the facts.

Commissioner Keon: For helping disseminate factual information.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Obviously our biggest concern is the traffic there.

Frank: Absolutely.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Thank you so much.

Frank: And that becomes a grading criterion as well.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Of course. It's just that we hear different things of what can and can't be done at the location, so thank you for clarifying for us and thank you for giving us a seat at the table so that we can ensure that it works out smoothly for our residents. So thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Madam City Manager, Mayor if I may, is there a possibility that maybe an E-NEWS or E-NEWS is best that we could potentially post a link that takes us exactly to this discussion in regards to the bridge and what the future plans are for the bridge in regards to the County and the measures of how we are working hand-in-hand with the County to, again, not replace the bridge, but refurbish the bridge and bring it up to code in regards to certain issues. And yes, it's important because we've all gotten a lot of e-mails and what I'd love to do is just basically pass them a link where they can see an entire discussion.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner, I don't want to talk about the scope right now because we are looking at that right now. So what I'm saying is we just want to keep that open right now.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Understand.

Commissioner Lago: I think the key is, like Commissioner Keon said; we are not replacing the bridge.

Commissioner Keon: The likelihood is not that you are going to replace it; you are going to refurbish it.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: We are looking at different options. We are looking at different options right now and have to weigh our pluses and minuses and timeframe, the time constraints. So right now we are really looking at the option and we have a seat at the table, so we'll be working closely with....

Commissioner Lago: Strike my comments. Let me give you a new one, OK. Let's make sure that we continue to inform the residents that we are having great conversations with the County and we'll find a solution to address their concerns. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you very much, appreciate it.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you very, very much.

Commissioner Lago: We are flexible.

[End: 3:57:55 p.m.]