

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 2, 2015, 8:00 a.m.
1 Alhambra Plaza, Suite 617, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

EDB MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	COMMISSIONERS
	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	
Scott Sime	P	E	P	X	X	X	P	P	P	P	P	P	Mayor Jim Cason
Olga Ramudo								P	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick
Stuart McGregor							E	E	E	E	P	E	Commissioner Pat Keon
June Morris Chair	P	P	E	X	X	X	P	E	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Vince Lago
Alexander Binelo Vice Chair	E	P	P	X	X	X	A	P	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Frank Quesada

A = Absent
E = Excused Absence
P = Present
X = No Meeting

STAFF AND GUESTS:

Sandra Hodge, Public Information Officer, Stantec
Victor Menocal, Project Manager, Ric-Man International
Earl Jackson, Lead Designer, Cooper Robertson (via phone)
Leonard Roberts, Assistant Director, Economic Development Department
Jorge Casuso, Business Development Analyst, Economic Development Department

Meeting Motion Summary:

A motion that the City Commission consider placing uniform signage with the names of the businesses on canopies along Miracle Mile, that the maturity of the trees be taken into account to provide visibility of the signs and that stone pillars be placed on each block with easily changeable business names passed unanimously.

A motion that the City Commission consider the negative impact of the trees being planted, which will attract birds, passed unanimously.

A motion that the City Commission consider baring smoking along the Streetscape to protect the health of patrons passed unanimously.

A motion that that the City Commission consider incorporating Mediterranean aspects into the Streetscape Project's design and that the overall design retain the uniqueness of Coral Gables passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2015 Board meeting passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2015 Joint Board meeting with the Property Advisory Board passed unanimously.

Ms. Morris brought the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m.

1. Update on Miracle Mile/Giralda Avenue Streetscape Project (Discussion)

Ms. Hodge introduced herself and said she had been going door-to-door speaking with merchants and that reaction to the Streetscape project has been “very positive.” There had been a great turnout of merchants, residents and realtors at an open house that had been held two weeks earlier at a storefront on Miracle Mile to display the designs, she said. Mr. Menocal said he was familiar with streetscape projects, having worked on the infrastructure for most of South Beach streetscape, including the one on Washington Avenue. He informed the Board that the project would cost an estimated \$25 million, including financing fees, and that a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) would be presented to the City Commission. The project will involve removing 119 oak trees and relocating them off-site and keeping five. Responding to a question from Mr. Sime, Mr. Menocal said that Ric-Man was not incentivized to lower the price but was working with the City and the designer to lower the costs and finish the project as quickly as possible without tearing up all the blocks at once. Root pruning is scheduled to begin in late January, when three of the oak trees will be removed, Menocal said. From February through March, crews are scheduled to replace the water mains and underground utilities with a “minimal impact” on businesses, he said. The main work is scheduled to start in May with the delivery of the pavers. Work will begin on the south side of Miracle Mile and will move from east to west, followed by the north side of the street, with the work also moving from east to west, Menocal said. The work may require closing the side of the street under construction and making the other side two lanes for a short period of time, he said. Five feet of sidewalk will remain open to pedestrians, he said, adding that businesses with only one entrance may be interrupted for a day or two. During roadway reconstruction, land bridges will be used to provide access to the stores, he said. On Giralda Avenue, sidewalks will remain open during roadway construction. The pavers are scheduled to be in place by May 2017, Menocal said. Weekly traffic impact plans will be emailed to stakeholders every week and there will be a monthly status update. The names of the businesses will be posted on the temporary construction signs, parking at the public garages will be promoted and the valet fees will be lowered from \$8 to \$5,” Menocal said. “We are trying to do everything humanly possible” to provide information and get feedback, he said.

The Board was shown images of the design. Ms. Ramudo objected to the “ultra-modern” look, saying it reminded her of CocoWalk and was not “in the tradition of Merrick.” “It’s the most horrible thing I’ve ever seen,” she said. Ms. Morris called the design “exciting” and said she

thought the colors were “gorgeous.” “To compete, you have to modernize,” she said. Ms. Morris suggested that there should be a kiosk to update the public about the project, and Ms. Ramudo suggested that there should be regular updates in the community newspapers. Ms. Ramudo also said that the permanent kiosks did not reflect the City’s Mediterranean design. Mr. Jackson said he tried to employ a design language that was “timeless” and added that the man hole covers would have a coral design befitting the City’s image. Mr. Jackson said the Streetscape will include pink Cassio plants that bloom from four to six weeks, are bare for about a month and remain green most of the time. He said there would be a total of 295 concrete bollards for seating. Ms. Morris suggested that misters be used as a cooling device in the hot weather, but Mr. Jackson said they only work in dry climates. Mr. Roberts said he was concerned the trees and bollards would restrict large parties at outdoor dining areas and Mr. Sime said he was disappointed the new trees would block business signs until they grow. Ms. Ramudo agreed, saying there should either be taller trees or lower signs. Mr. Binelo said he was concerned the trees would attract birds. “You stand up for a second, and they attack the food,” he said. Ms. Morris said the kiosks should display the names of the businesses per block, with the names easily changeable.

Mr. Sime made a motion that the City Commission consider placing uniform signage with the names of the businesses on canopies along Miracle Mile, that the maturity of the trees be taken into account to provide visibility of the signs and that stone pillars be placed on each block with easily changeable business names. Ms. Ramudo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Binelo made a motion that the City Commission consider the negative impact of the trees being planted, which will attract birds. Mr. Sime seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Binelo made a motion that the City Commission consider baring smoking along the Streetscape to protect the health of patrons. Ms. Ramudo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Ramudo made a motion that that the City Commission consider incorporating Mediterranean aspects into the Streetscape Project’s design and that the overall design retain the uniqueness of Coral Gables. Ms. Morris seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- 2. Mr. Sime made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2015 Board meeting. Mr. Binelo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 3. Mr. Binelo made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2015 Joint Board meeting with the Property Advisory Board. Mr. Sime seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

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The next Economic Development Board meeting will be held on January 6, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

Jorge Casuso, Economic Development Analyst, Economic Development Department