

CORAL GABLES PARKING ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes of February 23, 2022
At Public Safety Building / Community Meeting Room B
2151 Salzedo Street, Coral Gables FL 33134

MEMBERS	J F M A M J J A S O N D	APPOINTED BY
Ada Holian	E P	Mayor Vince Lago
Vicky Rua	P E	Vice Mayor Michael Mena
Javier Betancourt	P P	Commissioner Kirk Menendez
Blanca Famadas	P P	Commissioner Rhonda Anderson
Carlos Xiques	E P	Commissioner Jorge L. Fors, Jr.

SUPPORT STAFF

Kevin Kinney, Parking Director
John Kowalchik, Asst. Parking Dir.
Merlyn Marengo, Parking Admin Super.

N=No Meeting
A=Absent
E=Excused
P=Present
V=Virtual

GUESTS

Stefan Batic, Off Street Operations Supervisor
Mark Trowbridge, President of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce
LAZ Team: David Zell - VP Operations, Manuel Gonzalez - Facility Manager, Ana Martinez - Cashier

The PAB began at 05:32 P.M.

1. Public Comments
 - No Public Comments.

2. Mark Trowbridge – Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce (CGCC)
 - Chair Betancourt introduced Mr. Mark Trowbridge, President of CGCC for the past fifteen years (since 2006). He previously worked for Miami Parking Authority and is familiar with the particularities of Parking. He explained the Chamber was founded in 1925 by George E. Merrick, the Founding Father for City of Coral Gables. The mission of the Chamber is to promote businesses and events to attract companies, visitors, and residents to the city Beautiful. He recognized the role of the PAB and thanked all members for their work. He discussed the upcoming *Downtown Clean-Up* event on Monday Feb. 28th, 2022, at 5pm in which residents and volunteers will work together to clean up the business district in the city. He also spoke about the international flag program within the city, some of which are sponsored by sister cities and other countries representing the twenty-two international Consulates in the city. In addition,

he mentioned the large number of retail and restaurants that have opened in the last eighteen months. He mentioned the city is going to turn one hundred years in 2025, that thirty-seven percent (27%) of the tax base comes from the business community who occupy about five percent (5%) of the city's landmass. Estimates are that 50,000 a day come to the city for work and entertainment.

- Chair Betancourt asked if the Chamber has received any complaints, challenges or observations about Trolley, Block by Block or Freebee services that should be brought to the attention of the PAB. Mr. Trowbridge said they would like to see Block by Block service area extended and the Freebee wait times reduced but appreciated the service. The Trolley service hour expansion has been a relief to local employees and the businesses welcome the fact that more people can access the service (over 1,000 riders on the weekend) to come into the downtown area.
- Member Famadas asked what businesses are opening on Miracle Mile in the empty locations. Mr. Trowbridge responded the Terra Nova Group now owns approximately fourteen properties on Miracle Mile. He said they will be opening a capital grill concept restaurant at the old California Pizza Kitchen site and a coffee shop where Starbucks used to be; Susi Sake will open where Einstein Bagels used to be, and other restaurants including a BBQ place. The Chamber understands there is a lack of housewares, athletic wear, and other types of business in the area and encourages landlords to lease their properties for these types of businesses to open. He discussed the Mercedes Benz dealership moving into the old Public Service Building.

3. Approval of January 26, 2022, Meeting Minutes

- Member Famadas said she did not see the Biltmore Hotel new parking charge discussion included in the minutes, but noticed it was listed as an agenda item for this meeting. Director Kinney responded that yes it was not included in the minutes from the last meeting as it was not an Agenda item.
- Chair Betancourt informed the PAB that because there was a discussion about this at the last meeting it had been added to the agenda for this meeting. He also requested to include the Biltmore Hotel new parking charge discussion in the meeting minutes and that the PAB requested an update.
- On a Motion by Member Famadas, Seconded by Member Xiques, the PAB approved the Meeting Minutes with corrections.

4. Quarterly Review of On-Street and Garage Operations

- Stefan Batic updated the PAB on the occupancy progress of the Garages to eighty-five percent (85%) back to pre-pandemic numbers including transient and permit parking revenues.
- Chair Betancourt asked how parking is doing fiscally. Director Kinney said it seems parking will exceed its financial goals this year.

5. Staff Ambassador of the Month

- Mr. Batic introduced Ms. Ana Martinez, LAZ Parking Cashier. Mr. David Zell praised Ms. Martinez on her work ethics and Mr. Quintana congratulated her on a job well done since she began her career with LAZ Parking in 2019.

6. Strategic Plan Review and Update

- In 2017 the city hired a firm to assist in the development of a strategic planning process and assigned goals to each department to envision where the city would be in 2025 and to keep the city as “A World-Class City with a Hometown Feel”. However, because of the Covid-19 Pandemic some of the items have been delayed. Parking has prepared drafts of the department’s action plans for the next four years. The plans are being reviewed by the consultant the city hired and will be share with the PAB at the next meeting to include any feedback the PAB may have.
- Director Kinney shared some statistics with the PAB from two polls conducted as part of the measure used to see how successful the city will be on some of the action plans. The two polls related to the Parking Department were Street Cleaning and Trolley-Freebee Services. Eighty-one percent (81%) of the people polled rated our services at “Excellent/Good.”
- Chair Betancourt said from his experience working on strategic plans, there is always a lot of time dedicated to it and at the end the plan is shelved without any impact. He said that’s not the case in Coral Gables because everything is based on the strategic plan which adheres to the budget. If a project is not identified in the strategic plan, it does not get approved or funded. He commended and thanked the city for that effort and for sharing it with the PAB.
- Director Kinney said some of the action plans include the operation at the Mobility Hub and transportation transactional surveys polling Freebee and Trolley riders.
- Director Kinney will forward to PAB members the draft of the new Strategic Plan once received from the consultant.

7. Resolution Requesting Review of Projects Impacting Public Parking Supply

- Director Kinney presented a draft Resolution amending Resolution No. 26214, PAB original bylaws from 1987, which encapsulates the consensus of the board.
- Chair Betancourt reiterated that the Resolution had to be narrowed down to developments that waive or modify zoning code parking requirements. He is also concerned that the Development Review Committee is not the appropriate place for advisory boards to review projects. Once a project is submitted after DRC, it should be brought to the attention of the PAB for review early process.
- Member Famadas asked if the Resolution is to allow the PAB to chime in if there's a significant reduction in the parking a developer is going to provide; and asked to define “significant”. Director Kinney said it is anything less than what is required by code.

- Chair Betancourt said he would like the PAB to provide comments at the earliest possible opportunity prior to going to the Board of Architects, city Commission etc. and asked for more clarity about the timing when the PAB can review development applications.
- Chair Betancourt asked if the zoning code is the only place where the parking requirements could potentially be waived; or are there any potential regulations that can waive parking in the city code. Director Kinney said there are regulations in the city codes that allow for payments in Lieu. For example, if a developer proposes to remove on-street parking, they are required to pay \$42K per space; usually for bump-outs. However, if the developer proposes to remove several spaces on a block, then that would be an item brought to the PAB, so they can review parking impacts.
- Member Famadas asked if there is a placement guideline to add required green space (bump-outs). Director Kinney said he will ask the city’s Landscape Architect to advise and provide any guidelines to the PAB.
- Chair Betancourt asked to add a second bullet point to the Resolution “project that seeks relief from either the city code or zoning code parking requirements, provided to the City Manager, Parking Director, city Staff or city Commission at the earliest available opportunity”.
- Chair Betancourt asked for a Motion to approve the resolution as amended to include the city code and zoning code and to include the language “at the earliest available opportunity and impact beyond what is allowed”.
- On a Motion by Member Holian, Seconded by Member Xiques, the PAB agreed to move the Resolution as amended.

8. Scheduling of Public Meeting for Biltmore Way

- Director Kinney said the meeting scheduled for March 23, 2022, will be about improvements to the Biltmore Way ROW including shade trees, parking, and other adjustments to the streetscape for the area around the 600 and 700 block of Biltmore Way.

9. Resolution Requesting that a Significant Portion of the Mobility Hub Retail Space Support Micro Mobility

- Chair Betancourt reiterated the PABs interest in adding micro-mobility and attendant services in the Hub like lockers, showers etc.
- Director Kinney presented a draft Resolution for consideration.
- Chair Betancourt suggested a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the retail space be dedicated to micro mobility or attendant services.
- Member Holian asked how the city would ensure this is a safe service, accessible and affordable to the public. Director Kinney said it would be publicly and privately

managed with controls added. Any facility would be managed and might include paid service or membership fees.

- Chair Betancourt asked for a Motion to approve the resolution as amended to include the language “That a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the space identified as retail on the ground floor of the mobility hub be designated for use by vendors that provide micro-mobility or attendant services that are accessible to the community at large.”
- On a Motion by Member Xiques, Seconded by Member Holian, the PAB agreed to move the Resolution as amended.

10. Update on Biltmore Hotel Parking

- Director Kinney shared that the City Manager and City Attorney have asked the Hotel to discontinue paid parking. Biltmore Hotel covered the signs and will go thru the process to obtain approval from the City to change parking management in this lot. The Parking Department is not currently involved in the negotiations. The Hotel is coming to commission on March 8th to discuss the issue.

11. Open Discussion

- Chair Betancourt asked if Village of Merrick Park Garage is city property and asked what the arrangements are pertaining to the garage. Director Kinney said there are 3,400 parking spaces of that 400 spaces are dedicated to use for the businesses surrounding the Village of Merrick Park. The Collection should not be parking there. Chair Betancourt asked if the spaces could be used by a valet company for a nearby residential building. Director Kinney responded this would have to be negotiated with VMP management.
- Member Famadas asked about the PayByPhone - Residential Permits signage on Valencia and the PAB discussed what restrictions would be appropriate for the restricted area. Director Kinney offered to meet on site to discuss.
- Member Famadas mentioned Freebee service is unavailable on her block of 600 and 700 Valencia. She requested the service be available to her side of Valencia. Director Kinney will review the issue with Freebee.
- Member Famadas asked if board members can be issued parking medallions to park free of charge as a benefit to Board Members. Director Kinney indicated that this was a proposal that was being reviewed at the commission level.

ADJOURNMENT

The PAB adjourned at 07:08 P.M.