

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES**  
**Economic Development Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday, September 3, 2008**  
**Development Department Office Conference Room**  
**95 Merrick Way, Suite 450, Coral Gables, Florida**

MEMBERS	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	COMMISSIONERS
Richard DeWitt	P	P	P	P	P	P	P*	P	P	P	X	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick II
Ray Zomerfeld	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	E	P	P	X	P	Vice Mayor William Kerdyk, Jr.
Gladys Diaz Jourdain	E	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	E	P	X	P	Commissioner Maria Anderson
Dr. Al Smith	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	X	P	Commissioner Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
James Casey	E	P	P*	A	E	P	P	P	P	P	X	P	Commissioner Wayne "Chip" Withers

\*Present via telephone.

**STAFF:**

Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark, Development Director  
Jessica Wotherspoon

**A = Absent**  
**E = Excused Absence**  
**P = Present**  
**X = No Meeting**  
**() = Special Meetings**

**GUESTS:** Carol Ellis-Cutler, Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce; Parking Director Kevin Kinney; Laura Russo, Jose Gelabert-Navia; IT Director Gee Ming Chow and Raimondo Rodulfo (IT Department)

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Nancy C. Morgan, Coral Gables Services, Inc.

Chair Richard DeWitt called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. A quorum was reached.

**I. Approval of July 2, 2008 Board Minutes:**

**Mr. Casey made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 2, 2008 meeting as presented. Mr. Zomerfeld seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

**II. Downtown Parking Update:**

Copies of proposed Code amendments to Chapter 74, Article III (the Parking Code) were distributed along with copies of Mr. Kinney's September 2 memorandum to the Planning and Zoning Board. Referencing these documents, Mr. Kinney first updated the Board regarding the Parking Advisory Board's recommendation regarding the DYL project. His board's comments were summarized as follows:

- Inclusion of the City's parking lot makes the development a better development;
- They believe the City's policy should be that any time there is something taken away from the public system, there should be an equivalent investment back into the public parking system. With the City's current cost of developing a parking space at approximately \$25,000, the Parking Advisory Board said that \$25,000 per space put back to develop additional public parking in the City's business district where it is needed;
- The specific parking lot at this property is a fairly under-utilized facility;
- The entire area in a two block radius from the DYL property includes over 6,000 parking spaces, making the 34 spaces in the surface parking spot are not critical;
- The return of the 34 spaces in the DYL 1100-space garage have no value because they will be part of the 6,000 spaces. The current 34 spaces in the surface parking lot serve specific businesses across the street from the DYL project.

A discussion was held about parking in private garages, during which time Mr. Kinney discussed development of a parking strategy for the City that would maximize parking space, stating his goal to achieve optimum efficiency.

Mr. Kinney then updated the Board on proposed changes to the Code as presented to the City Commission on first reading. He described a "payment in lieu" program that would reduce the impact of parking requirements on

urban design, help manage transportation demand and provide an alternative means for developers to meet parking requirements either in whole or in part. The program, in practice by many communities, has also been the subject of numerous professional reviews and articles. It would help the City and the development community to implement mutually-beneficial parking strategies that would enhance attractiveness, convenience and quality of life in the urban environment and would position the City to better manage future transportation demands. Benefits of the payment-in-lieu system were reviewed as follows:

- Improvements to urban design;
- Reduction in total amount of parking needed to serve defined areas;
- Reduction in the need for variances for parking, resulting in more equitable treatment of landowners;
- Allows more creativity and flexibility in project design;
- Generates additional funding for development of public parking improvements;
- Increases the feasibility of infill development or redevelopment;
- Allows adaptive reuse of historic buildings where the new use requires additional parking.

### **III. DYL Project – Board Discussion :**

Ms. Rivenbark summarized the July meeting with DYL regarding the proposed land swap, reporting that the appraiser engaged to evaluate the Greco/LeJeune parking lot stated that the proposed swap was basically a dollar-for-dollar value. Distinctions are the ability to assemble, which adds slightly more value; however, a square foot comparison would make the transaction equal. Regarding the value of the City's land as an abutting site, there is added value of about \$350,000 to \$400,000.

Mr. DeWitt expressed concern that the appraiser was indicating that the property on LeJeune Road was the same value as the developer's site. At Mr. DeWitt's request, Ms. Rivenbark re-discussed that issue with the appraiser as well as the value of the alley as part of the transaction. The appraiser confirmed the value of the property as stated previously. DYL also had an independent appraiser who arrived at the same conclusion.

Ms. Rivenbark summarized the proposed transaction, after which she spoke of the questions the Board was charged with answering to comply with the Procurement Code.

During discussion, Mr. Gelabert-Navia provided corrections to the document describing the transaction, and also said that Public Works asked DYL to straighten out the intersection, resulting in DYL extending landscaping by an additional 3,000 square feet. He explained the height limitation of the parking lot and how that would be affected if DYL built-to-right and the land swap did not occur. He also discussed the alley vacation, current alley configuration and uses and the proposed alley that would be internal.

Mr. DeWitt, who had to leave the meeting, continued participating via telephone.

Ms. Russo clarified that DYL met with Parks and Recreation and reported that their board was in favor of the land swap, wanted the park and made recommendations that the park include an interactive water feature. They asked DYL to consider including a portion of the park or adjacent swale area for dogs, and expressed enthusiasm about having a restaurant on the edge of the park. However, they requested a physical demarcation to separate the restaurant property and the park with park signage. They did not discuss prohibiting restaurant seating in the park. Discussion ensued about the interactive water feature.

Regarding the proposed payment-in-lieu of issue at \$25,000 per space versus the proposed land swap, Ms. Russo stated that it was under deliberation and would depend also on the City Manager's counter proposal. She said DYL was not opposed to the idea of providing some payment for parking, but not in favor of paying plus buying the land plus providing the park, including perpetual maintenance. She stated an issue with paying for the parking that is the on-street parking that will be lost due to implementation of the streetscape master plan, suggesting the City make a policy decision on its preference for more trees or more on-street parking. Mr. DeWitt suggested that a valet service from the DYL garage might be workable.

Regarding questions to be answered by the Board (as stated above), Ms. Rivenbark advised the Board that all Property Advisory Board's responses to questions were affirmative, and that board recommends the swap.

Board questions/responses for Procurement Code purposes:

- Is the proposed use in keeping with City goals and objectives? Response: Affirmative.
- What is the economic impact to the City, including the proposed use in keeping with 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? Response: The project does expand the revenue base, creates jobs and a revenue stream, and improves the overall quality of life in the City.
- Are there alternatives available for the proposed disposition, including assembly of adjacent properties, and can the project be accomplished under a private ownership assembly? Response: Available alternatives: 1) leave the parking lot and not approve the land swap; 2) have DYL purchase the land. Conclusion: There are alternatives to the disposition, but the land swap is the preferred alternative.
- Is there anything else the Economic Development Board wants to take into consideration in formulating a recommendation? Board discussion of the parking issue: Give consideration to the Parking Director's comments and the Parking Advisory Board's recommendation. Board conclusion: It does not seem equitable to charge \$850,000 when exchanging the land. Mr. Gelabert-Navia advised that the completed project would include 280 parking spaces devoted to retail, including spaces for Havana Harry's Restaurant parking, and also elevators opening to the main exit on LeJeune Road.

Lengthy discussion was held about parking, after which a summary of responses and conclusions was reached as follows: The Economic Development Board, based on the Procurement Code provisions, views this project as 1) in keeping with City goals and objectives; 2) there is favorable economic impact to the City (as reinforced by a detailed report submitted by DYL itemizing the economic benefit); 3) there are alternatives available to the proposed disposition, but the proposed swap is the best alternative; 4) that the Board recommends that continued negotiations take place regarding the loss of parking revenue and that lost revenue be replaced; 5) that parking rates be set at City rates or other considerations versus an in-lieu-of parking program; 6) based on these recommendations, that the City Commission allow the City Manager to move forward with the land swap as proposed. **The Board voted unanimously to adopt the summary of responses and conclusions.**

#### **IV. Update – Cell Phone Coverage in City:**

Mr. Chow distributed the final draft of the City-wide cellular tower RFP, the purpose of which is to solicit companies in the business of developing, financing and managing cellular towers for the purpose of hosting wireless carriers to improve cellular coverage within the City. Ms. Rivenbark advised that the Commission accepted the need to improve cell phone coverage; however, they were not as yet given an implementation plan to accomplish that objective. Mr. Chow comprehensively reviewed the document, welcomed input from Board members and discussed proposed changes.

Criteria for evaluation was discussed along with the importance of assigning point and weight values to each portion of the proposal. It was agreed that aesthetics should be part of both requirements and criteria and be architecturally compatible with the City and its neighborhoods. Mr. Casey suggested that each bidder provide a report on the health and safety issues that might evolve from the proposal. An environmental impact analysis would be a requirement after the award as part of property due diligence. The importance, also, of having the RFPs evaluated was discussed. The final RFP document will be brought back to the Board.

#### **V. Updates:**

**Public Workshop:** Ms. Rivenbark announced that Miracle Mile and "restaurant row" streetscape public meeting would be held as a public workshop on Monday, September 8 at 6:00 p.m. at the Westin Colonnade Hotel. The BID will host the event.

**Country Club:** Mr. Zomerfeld was selected as the Board's representative to the RFP Evaluation Committee.

**VI. Additional Business:**

Ms. Ellis-Cutler reported that the Chamber of Commerce received an e-mail from the Mayor regarding the City's efforts to improve public cleanliness of the City's streets/alleys and homeless issues. Ms. Ellis-Cutler asked the Board for input about how the Chamber might be able to help in this effort.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

**Next Board Meeting: October 1, 2008, 8:00 a.m. in the Development Office**

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Swanson Rivenbark  
Development Director  
Secretary to the Economic Development Board