

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-10
March 29, 2022
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-10 [Start: 4:18 p.m.]

Discussion regarding blower etiquette, specifically regarding a proposal to prohibit blowing leaves and debris into streets or adjacent properties. (Sponsored by Commissioner Anderson)

Mayor Lago: You want to go onto G-10, since we are here talking about blower etiquette.

Commissioner Anderson: Oh yes. That's an outflow of my visit to Salvadore Park. I was with Mr. Kinney, and he had his vehicle parked there. While I came out with a tape measure to measure the park and we were getting blown with the dust, the dirt, the cloud, the leaves, and everything else, so that's why I called it blower etiquette.

Mayor Lago: Well, you know it's interesting you bring that up. We've gotten a lot of residents who have reached out to us about potentially outlawing gas blowers. We've tried as a city; I think I brought it up a few years ago and we tried like a trial run with our own employees, and I don't think it was very successful. I don't know if they are still continuing to try to use the equipment or it was just too much of an effort.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think the issue was it was a battery charge, right.

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Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes. I'm not going quite that far. What I'm saying is, and I'm close to Biltmore Way, so I get to see it all the time. They are blowing all the dirt out or the garages into the street. They were blowing when I was at Salvadore Park, everything from the residential area and if Kevin hadn't been there, it would have stayed on the park and made more work for our employees. So, perhaps with the help of our staff members identifying where that's occurring, perhaps we can put some teeth in this to be able to do something about it, give a citation for people that just dump all it out in the street all the time and clog our drains.

Commissioner Menendez: Before you put this on the agenda, I was driving through Coral Gables, and I just realized they just moved their leaves from one property to somebody else's. Its almost as if you took your trash bags and you moved it to your neighbor's side of their house, five houses away, it's the same concept. They are your leaves, but you are moving them to somebody else's property and its just musical chairs but with leaves. Its really out of control.

Commissioner Anderson: So, I'm going to ask staff to work on something that we can put together and have some teeth prohibiting this in the future.

City Attorney Ramos: So, it is prohibited in the code. Maybe an administrative order on how to enforce it is what's maybe better to do.

Commissioner Anderson: We were choking out there in the dust. There was no courtesy whatsoever.

Commissioner Menendez: Have a question. Do you think the biggest problem comes from commercial, you know landscape companies that have their permits or whatever license through the city?

Commissioner Anderson: Its generally not a homeowner that's being rude. Its usually a landscaper or a condo maintenance person.

Commissioner Menendez: So maybe we can put something in the process where they get their right to do their business in Coral Gables, that if they do something like that, they risk having their license or whatever it is revoked, along those lines.

Commissioner Fors: That's been preempted as I found out a few weeks ago.

Commissioner Menendez: Oh, really.

Commissioner Fors: The licensing program is over.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes. Yes.

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City Attorney Ramos: By next July, I think it is, it sunsets.

Commissioner Anderson: But at least perhaps...

Commissioner Menendez: Oh, we have some time.

Commissioner Anderson: Perhaps we can have citations issued; the NSA's can bring it to the attention of code, and code can come on out and give them a citation, just so we can kind of the carrot and stick approach. I think its necessary. Its happened far too long, far too often.

Commissioner Menendez: I agree.

Commissioner Anderson: Alright.

Mayor Lago: So, you'll work on some legislation and bring it back.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes. You guys will help.

Mayor Lago: Perfect.

City Attorney Ramos: So, you want to amend our current legislation?

Commissioner Menendez: Put some teeth in it.

Commissioner Anderson: Let's review it and see what we can do to step it up.

City Attorney Ramos: Okay.