

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-13
July 11, 2017
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Commissioner Frank Quesada
Commissioner Michael Mena**

City Staff

**City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
Assistant City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
Deputy City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Public Works Director, Eduardo Santamaria
Parking Director, Kevin Kinney
Government Affairs Manager, Naomi Levi-Garcia
Public Service Director, Brook Dannemiller**

Public Speaker(s)

Eric Zichella

Agenda Item G-13 [12:29:07 p.m.]

A discussion regarding a School Protection Zone Plan.
(Sponsored by Vice Mayor Keon)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: School Protection Zone Plan, Vice Mayor Keon.

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Agenda Item G-13 – Discussion regarding a School Protection Zone Plan.

Vice Mayor Keon: No. I'd just asked for an update, so that we can put it on the record as to when -- you know, we decided that the City has alternative planting material in swales and we continue to get the problems around -- particularly, around Sunset Elementary right now with their abuse of the parking and the destruction of the swales in the area, you know, despite our best efforts to try and talk with the school about not having people park on and destroy the swales. So, we had passed a school protection -- a resolution on this, and I -- all I asked is when do we -- when are we starting this project, so that it is in place by the time school starts in Sunset, in August.

Public Works Director Santamaria: We've already started -- right now, we have a covenant for right-of-way improvements with the County in place, because we're going to be planting in County right-of-way. They have to be on board with it, and we'll be taking on the maintenance responsibility.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay, so would...

Public Works Director Santamaria: So, we've already started to implement some of the improvements.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay, so it's on Sunset; is that right?

Public Works Director Santamaria: That's correct.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Parking Director Kinney: Sunset and San Ignacio (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Keon: And San Ignacio.

Parking Director Kinney: And, then when we get closer to the fall, the enforcement part begins. The two officers will go down there every morning and police will also be involved in enforcing down there.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Unidentified Speaker: But the...

Vice Mayor Keon: Alright, thank you. I just want to make sure that it's going to be in place by the time school starts.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: Yes. The plantings are already starting. They're along Sunset and San Ignacio. Our staff has to meet with the residents because, you know...

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: Residents are responsible for the abutting swale. We're planting Wart ferns, which are low, dense. I can send you some pictures. They would really make it impossible to park on the swale with those ferns in place.

Commissioner Lago: Did we finally address the employees that were from Riviera Health that were parking in the neighborhood? Remember, we had a few meetings outside...

Vice Mayor Keon: No, that was on -- yeah, that was -- that's down by the...

Commissioner Lago: That's next to the attorney's office.

Vice Mayor Keon: The Women's Club.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Commissioner Lago: His residence.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Parking Director Kinney: No. There's several parking issues going on down there. One is actually right in front of the Women's Club on Sunset, and there are still -- and we are citing some, but there are still people from Riviera Health intruding into the neighborhood a little bit, not as much as there was. They do have in place the remote parking, but also this fall, hopefully, about the time school starts, we're getting back 40 public parking spaces around Riviera Health Club, which should improve the situation.

Commissioner Lago: Are we also looking at an opportunity to maybe coordinate with the school, because the school has a major issue with people kind of lining up, dropping off their children in the middle of the neighborhood, parking on people's swales. We've been there several times. We've seen it.

Parking Director Kinney: I'll let my neighbor -- our School Board neighbor address it, but we've met with them.

Commissioner Lago: I know you have. I've been with you when you met with them.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: Yes. We have met with them several times. But, as part of the -- we've been calling it the Neighborhood Protection Zone internally, but the Neighborhood/School Protection Zone has a component where we do reach out to the schools, coordinate with the staff, evaluate their drop-off/pickup procedures or school bus queuing, their maintenance of traffic plans and also inform -- I've already reached out to the School Board

representative to inform her of this policy coming online, so we will expect the school -- Sunset Elementary to participate with the City and to making this program a success and making sure that the parents are fully informed of what the correct protocol is.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Mena: But...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Commissioner Mena: You referenced Sunset and San Ignacio, and I know you're planning things on San Ignacio. The next street over, full disclosure, is my street, San Remo, and we have a significant issue there as well. There's probably, on any given morning, 30 cars parked on swales.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: Right, so...

Commissioner Mena: Is -- and part of my concern is we're going to plant things that prevent people from parking on San Ignacio, which sounds to me like that many more are going to come to the next street, and I want to know what we're doing about not only that street, but the rest of the streets going into that neighborhood.

Parking Director Kinney: There are enforcement officers that go down there every morning and they do patrol San Remo. The issue with San Remo is there are locations where -- so, we are in the process of producing signage within the City on the whole. As it applies to neighborhood protection zones around a school, there may wind up being signage that has to be there. And, San Remo, because it's kind of a mix, there are some homes that have signage and there are some that do not. So, there's cars that my officers can cite and cars that are essentially legally parked right now. But, that will be the next street we have to address, absolutely.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: To also answer your question, the zone will extend beyond Sunset and San Ignacio. However, we've just identified those streets for swale plantings done by the City. But, the residents in the entire zone will have certain benefits. They'll be able to apply for no-fee permits to do their own swale plantings. They'll be able to apply for no-fee permits to have a residential parking zone...

Parking Director Kinney: Yes.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: In place. And we'll look at them as an exception in terms of signage. Generally, we're moving away from the signage throughout the city, but those areas, we'd like to make certain signage available to them. No parking, no parking during school hours...

Commissioner Mena: Yeah. I just want to be clear that it's -- you know, it sounds like sort of just a parking issue. It's not just that. It's not just a nuisance, although, it is. It's a -- this is a serious safety issue. I mean, I -- as someone who drives by these cars every morning, I go extremely slow and I'm very cautious, because there are little kids jumping out of cars to go to school right in the middle of a residential neighborhood where cars are driving a foot away from them. I mean, it's really a pretty chaotic situation. I understand what you're saying about the signs, but I can tell you the first block of San Remo and San Ignacio right now is a free-for-all...

Commissioner Lago: Commissioner.

Commissioner Mena: In the morning. It's a parking lot.

Commissioner Lago: If I could just add on to what you're saying because I've -- how long have we been talking about this, two years now? So, we've met -- I've met with staff probably three or four times on site just to discuss this issue. You have -- what you have in your neighborhood

is you have people who illegally park in your driveway and basically, box you in so you can't leave your house until that person comes back to their car. You have people that are illegally parking on swales, destroying people's swales, destroying their landscaping. You have, like you mentioned before, the children who pop out of the cars. The cars are barely even stopped, running around because the parents do not want to wait in that queuing line -- by the way, the queuing line at Sunset Elementary is inadequate. I mean, to say inadequate is -- I'm giving them too much, okay. That queuing line should go deep into the school and curve around. Then what they do is they also have the light that they make it one way, which protects the neighborhoods on the other side of Sunset, but it forces a bottleneck on the corner of Sunset -- God, what is the...

Vice Mayor Keon: What's that street?

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: Trionfo.

Parking Director Kinney: Trionfo.

Commissioner Lago: Yes. It's a major issue. I talked about -- and again, I know that they don't like it when I mention this. I talked about doing curbs --, because I spoke to the residents and I said, listen, I don't live in your neighborhood, but I feel you. You know, they all came out and said, let's do curbs, let's do curbs, let's do curbs. And again, you have issues with drainage. You have issues with maintenance. But curbing would force people to stay off the swales, to understand that if you park your car on a swale, you're going to have major damage to the issue. And, I think that until we have buy-in from Sunset and we force them to queue, I don't know, in the field, to figure out a way that they can do some sort of swing-around in the mornings, because they have rear access in that building. They just don't want to do a queuing station all the way back there. And, it has to be done because this -- not only -- forget the neighborhood, which is the most important issue. The congestion on Sunset for the people that live in that neighborhood, you know, it's a deterrent. It's a deterrent to even live in that neighborhood. I

don't even know how those people can live there of how unbearable it is. And then you have people from Riviera Neighborhood Association -- excuse me, not the RNA. The Riviera rehab, parking in people's neighborhoods. Remember -- Kevin, we were there and I think Naomi was there -- the amount of garbage that was in front of that resident's home, the attorney. What was the attorney's name? I forgot his name.

Parking Director Kinney: Mr...

Commissioner Lago: You know his son. He went to Belen. He's an architect.

Commissioner Quesada: Oh, Lombana.

Commissioner Lago: Lombana.

Parking Director Kinney: Lombana.

Commissioner Quesada: Lombana.

Commissioner Lago: We went there at a perfect time. And I remember Commissioner Slesnick was there the last time I went. And, the amount of garbage in front of that person's house -- and you open the door and people -- you just see all the people coming in, parking their car and walking their kids to school, because they don't want to wait in the queuing station. Opening their car doors and just dumping garage. Those are people that don't live in the City of Coral Gables.

Vice Mayor Keon: Breakfast from McDonald's.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, the McDonald's, their Starbuck's. Those are people who don't live in Coral Gables. And I've had this conversation with Mr. Iglesias on multiple occasions. It

happens to me at UM. But, our issue has been remediated significantly, because of the fact that UM and the City have worked together to get less kids driving, to get more people on campus. I've seen a significant drop in the congestion. But this area -- I mean, I feel for you. I don't know how you guys do it in that area. That has to be a buy-in from the school. Until there's buy-in from the school, I think that the City can only do so much. I mean, unless you're going to start ticketing everybody and we're going to have police there on every block, you know, forcing people -- and we're going to start doing the school's job.

Commissioner Mena: Yeah. No, at some point, we need to stand up to...

Vice Mayor Keon: The school system.

Commissioner Mena: The school system.

Commissioner Lago: You have to.

Commissioner Mena: I mean, we just finished talking about them tearing out windows from a historic building. Now, we're talking about this and there needs to be more...

Commissioner Lago: And by the way, just in full disclosure, the school system is my client, just so you know. But there comes a point where we have to -- I build for the school system. So, we have to take a stand here because this is a quality of life issue.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And so, this is an important conversation, because we are working hard at establishing relationships. But, from the school's perspective, they are in charge of the students in the school and on property, and we haven't been able to get traction (INAUDIBLE) off property.

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: On where the parents are dropping them off or those kinds of issues. We're working...

Commissioner Lago: Can I ask you a question? Can I ask you -- because you brought a really good point? Is it -- we've had so many meetings -- and I think you came to one or two of the meetings. We had the public safety aides there and roaming the neighborhoods. Is there any opportunity to have some sort of meeting on the grounds with the school officials?

Parking Director Kinney: We've actually been to the school and met with the whole administrative staff on multiple occasions...

Commissioner Lago: And, they've seen this chaos firsthand and they're...

Parking Director Kinney: Well, you know...

Commissioner Lago: Okay with it.

Parking Director Kinney: They live with it every day. Typically, the first response is it only lasts for 20 minutes; deal with it. And that's not something we accept, but it is what they believe.

Commissioner Lago: I'll let Commissioner Mena answer that one.

Commissioner Mena: No, listen, I think when we start dealing with their -- you know, not clients, but their parents and when we start enforcing our Code on these issues and the parents start complaining to the school about it, I think there needs to be a better option for drop-off and pickup, then I think they'll adjust their behavior. But we need to do something because, again, right now...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What is...

Commissioner Mena: It's a free-for-all.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Make a motion. I mean, what's the Commission's desire at this point?

Commissioner Lago: I'd love to have a sunshine meeting with anybody that wants to attend.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: You can run this. You're the most affected.

Commissioner Mena: We can host it at my house.

(LAUGHTER)

Commissioner Lago: We should host it at 7:30 in the morning, right there.

Commissioner Mena: Absolutely.

Commissioner Lago: And I'd like to have a sit-down discussion with the School Board again. I know you guys have done this -- you've exhausted yourself. Naomi's been out there; Kevin. But I think that -- and I agree with you. The idea of planting some sort of low-lying bush is going to work, but people are going to destroy that anyways.

Vice Mayor Keon: Well, what we have found, though, is that, in general, people tend not to park on the swales that are planted. That's what our experience has been.

Commissioner Quesada: Yeah, but what they do is they look for the gaps.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay, but -- no.

Commissioner Lago: Or they destroy the edge.

Vice Mayor Keon: You know what, so what we would like...

Commissioner Lago: Or they destroy the edge.

Vice Mayor Keon: Well, so what we would like to do is start with and see if planting on Sunset affects their ability to park on Sunset, and we'll just keep moving back and doing things until they are so far from the school that it is better for them to get in the queue...

Unidentified Speaker: Right.

Vice Mayor Keon: Than it is to walk six blocks...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, but then we'll have...

Vice Mayor Keon: To the school.

Commissioner Lago: Then we'll have...

Vice Mayor Keon: So...

Commissioner Lago: Another problem, and the problem will be that the queue will be so big down Sunset...

Vice Mayor Keon: Well...

Commissioner Lago: That you'll have grid -- no, no, I'm just -- you'll have gridlock. And what you have right now is parents just going around in circles, around in circles, creating more congestion. That's one of the issues that we talked about smart parking.

Vice Mayor Keon: Right, and then we'll ask...

Commissioner Lago: That we'll talk about in a few moments briefly, but you know, that's what the result is.

Vice Mayor Keon: But, then we'll ask the County...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Vice Mayor Keon: To get involved. I mean, I'd like...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: So, we'll...

Vice Mayor Keon: To start with...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Call -- you want to call for the meeting in the neighborhood and we can...

Vice Mayor Keon: I mean, we've had the meetings in the neighborhood. What I'd like to do is just -- I wanted to know that the plantings are going to be done by the time school starts, so we

can begin to evaluate the effectiveness of that as we move forward with other tools to try and deal with it.

Public Service Director Dannemiller: The plant -- we're working on the permit with the County for the -- they're on board with it. We're doing the paperwork and processing that now.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Public Service Director Dannemiller: We've only gotten confirmation from one resident on Sunset that they're on board with us planting there. We're knocking on the door and living notes, and we haven't gotten ahold of all of them.

Commissioner Quesada: Oh.

Public Service Director Dannemiller: So, depending on -- if the residents don't want it, then, obviously, we're not going to...

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

Public Service Director Dannemiller: Plant it, but...

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

Public Service Director Dannemiller: Then the swale's their responsibility to restore.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Public Service Director Dannemiller: So, that's...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Public Service Director Dannemiller: As long as we get feedback from them, we'll be able to plant before the school year starts.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much. And then Commissioner Mena is going to take charge of...

Commissioner Quesada: Should we have...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: (INAUDIBLE) meeting.

Commissioner Quesada: Like David Plummer or a traffic engineer look at something like this?

Vice Mayor Keon: What would they do, though?

Commissioner Quesada: I have no idea.

Vice Mayor Keon: I mean, my concern is...

Commissioner Quesada: Given that's all they do all day long...

Vice Mayor Keon: They will tell us exactly what we know.

Commissioner Lago: Just to memorialize it in paper in a document or something...

Commissioner Quesada: No, not only that, but they just...

Commissioner Lago: Says there's an issue. Then we could do something more appropriate than what we're doing right now. There's...

Parking Director Kinney: One of the things that Commissioner Lago mentioned, they have a fairly large...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Parking Director Kinney: Parking lot in the back that they don't impact at all for the parents' pickup and drop-off. And there could be a much longer...

Commissioner Quesada: Queuing area.

Parking Director Kinney: Queue on property, if they wanted.

Commissioner Quesada: Because something like that, it makes a lot of sense, because then the kids can pop in and out from all different locations in the queue on property.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Commissioner Quesada: That's a good idea.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

Vice Mayor Keon: But then, how do we force them to change their drop-off...

Commissioner Lago: Oh, I mean...

Vice Mayor Keon: To on property?

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: Well, we have to engage them. We have to...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: You know, maybe if we can offer traffic consultant services. You know, they may be more amenable to making some changes...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: Because, they've had an expert do the legwork for them.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: I think we can do those things concurrently. We should...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: Still move forward with the plantings...

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: If the Commission is on board because...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: This is the sweet spot. Now's the time to do it before school starts.

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

Government Affairs Manager Levi-Garcia: And then explore...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

City Attorney Leen: I would just...

Commissioner Lago: Plant...

City Attorney Leen: I would just...

Commissioner Lago: Plant the trees. Have a strong police presence there. The moment that someone -- a kid gets out of a car and runs into traffic, you got to ticket the parent. I know that's not your realm, but at the end of the day, that's what we have to do as a City. I mean, again, someone's going to get run over.

City Attorney Leen: I would just add that, you know, we're looking at a process where we're going to balance the interests and work it out with them. Same -- my same view as to the County, though. Ultimately, I view this in the nature of a zoning regulation, just like the other ones, our police power. And we do have the ability to impose this and enforce it in a court of law, if we wish, or through code enforcement. Hopefully, we'll be able to work it out.

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We're going to take a break for lunch. And before we go, Madam City Manager, I wanted to -- I questioned the -- and I questioned it with Peter Iglesias -- the request for qualifications was it or proposals from -- I mean, for the public safety building. And, I questioned the way that the addendum was drafted and that it portrayed just one company. The way it was drafted, it was tailor made for one company and I very much objected to that.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Well, excuse me, Mr. Mayor. I will -- 100 percent confirming to you that it was not drafted for anyone in particular. What we do want is someone -- a team that has public safety or secured government experience.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Right, but that -- I would also request and want the Commission's support that whoever drafted that, the committee, the people who drafted that proposal not be in...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We've already...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The selection committee.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: But, sir -- I understand your comments. We have -- independent of all of this -- identified an external evaluation committee that are subject matter experts that -- to review this and to formulate a recommendation.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, my opinion is that in the past we have favored one company over others, and I very much object to that and I will...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: But...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Look into it if you (INAUDIBLE)...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I promise you -- I commit to you, as your professional, that we have not and I have not had anyone come to my office to express concern. So, if people are expressing concerns individually to the City Commission, I'm surprised given I am not under the cone, given it is my responsibility for procurement that no one would have had the courtesy to come to my office to discuss it. But I promise you, this has not been drafted for any one firm in mind...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It doesn't look that way.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: That we have developed a system with 20 months' time to develop a well-organized building, that we are putting together experiences that we believe are essentially important for the success of the project. But I'm happy to meet individually with anyone that is expressing concerns to you, so that I can understand what their issues are and we can talk through them.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, sir.

Eric Zichella: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Eric Zichella (phonetic), 2129 Southwest 3rd Avenue, offices and Gables resident as well. Thanks for your time today. I want to be clear that we're not here to obstruct the process. We understand that there's a tight timeline on construction of this very important project for the City. What we're looking for is a level playing field. We would like to see a specification created that is open and that encourages competition from the best firms to put forward the best people that they have. The requirement that was included in the original RFP that the lead project manager be a licensed general contractor is something that's very peculiar. It's not something that you see in construction procurement. I'm sure Commissioner Lago can attest to that, him being a contractor himself. But I'll tell you that I've been through hundreds, if not thousands of procurements for construction projects and I've never seen that requirement for the lead project manager. So, when the questions came in during the Q&A period asking to potentially replace that with a more open specification say, for instance, a

lead project manager with 15 years of experience building public safety buildings, I expected that the response would be, yes, no problem. But instead, it came back with a tighter specification that said, not only do you have to be a licensed general contractor in Florida, but now the only experience that counts are buildings between 80,000 square feet and 140,000 square feet.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's absurd.

Mr. Zichella: That's odd.

Vice Mayor Keon: That was taken off, though.

Mr. Zichella: That's odd. It was taken off a week later after people complained about it. But they left the specification in there for a licensed general contractor. That's limiting in competition and that's not what you should be doing here. So, you know, respectfully, I would just suggest to you that, you know, your end users here are the people that should be reviewing this. I would suggest to you that your police chief, your fire chief, those kind of people should be reviewing these proposals when they come in. Certainly, you want people that understand construction projects, but the folks that drafted Addendum 2 to this procurement, in my view, should not be included in the process any further.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And so, Mr. Mayor, I believe in the procurement process that we're going through. We have identified an evaluation committee that has strong experience in presenting a recommendation. I am happy to talk to any firm that has concerns with this process, but there is a high level of integrity that has been woven into this, and I believe that that integrity is preserved in this process. But I am -- I stand -- my door is open. Happy to meet with anybody to talk about any concerns that they may have.

Commissioner Lago: Madam City Manager, Mayor, if I may. Just -- I'll be...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, please, please, please.

Commissioner Lago: I'll be very brief on this issue, because I know that we're on a tight timeline. The gentleman mentioned the issue -- and you referred to me in regards to my background. I have never seen, in my opinion, that type of stipulation in an RFQ or RFP that the project manager has to be a GC. Again, I am under no circumstance qualified to even build a building or design a building of this magnitude, a public safety building. I've never built a public safety building. I wouldn't even know where to start, so I wouldn't be in that position. But, for example, when I build in the healthcare industry or when I build in the educational industry or in commercial projects, I've never had an RFQ where it states that the project manager or executive project manager or superintendent needs to be a GC. Usually, all these individuals fall under the auspice of the general contractor's license, the CGC contract. This is not kind of like a law firm where every single lawyer that works at the firm has to be, you know, a licensed attorney. So, I think we have a little bit of room for flexibility here, because I would hate to see a firm not have a project manager on their staff that's a licensed general contractor, but have somebody who has 30 years of experience and them be excluded, because that person may not be a GC. Do you understand what I'm saying? It's -- I think there's a little bit -- there's a little bit of wiggle room there. Would I like to have a project manager that has a GC license? Yeah, but not everybody has taken that exam, so...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Also, I'm troubled by the way this started with the same company that proposed or did the RF -- Request for Qualifications, et cetera, being the one that was hired to do the plans. I'm very troubled by that.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, I would like to say one thing. I did receive a call from George Navarro, representing MCM. I'd like to put that on the record. He raised these issues with me. I raised the -- I contacted Peter Iglesias, the ACM/Building Official, and I raised the concerns that George had raised. And Peter put me at ease and that, you know, this was a process with

integrity, that he had reasons and that the Procurement Department had reasons for putting these requirements in. When they received the objection, they did make adjustments to it, and I thought they were appropriate adjustments. You know, ultimately, I feel that when staff says something like that, we must take their word for that. And, I do believe Peter because he's a man of great integrity, but I do...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, everybody believes Peter, but...

City Attorney Leen: Think he should...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We are responsible to the citizens...

City Attorney Leen: No, no.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That the process has integrity...

City Attorney Leen: And Mr. Mayor...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And you're not; we are.

City Attorney Leen: You're absolutely right. And as the Commission, you have a duty to inquire and to have oversight.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Right.

City Attorney Leen: I just want to say because it's been put on the record, though...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I trust Peter, but whoever...

City Attorney Leen: I did look into it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Drafted this...

City Attorney Leen: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I mean, that 80,000 to 140,000...

Commissioner Lago: But we -- by the way...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's ridiculous.

Commissioner Lago: Just so you know, I brought before you on the Commission -- I brought that up and I was on the losing end of a vote on that issue where AECOM drew up the specs...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Right.

Commissioner Lago: They drew up the specs and then they drew up the RFQ, and then they won. I opposed that.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's...

Commissioner Lago: Because again, I said very clearly at the moment that as the general contractor and engineering firm, I would under no circumstances bid on a project knowing that there's a firm who did all the preconstruction work. I'm just clarifying it for the Mayor.

Commissioner Quesada: Yeah...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It stinks.

Commissioner Lago: But hold on. But, I want to echo our City Attorney's comments in regards to Peter. I have the utmost confidence and...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Absolutely.

Commissioner Lago: And I trust Peter, and I think he's probably the most skilled and qualified engineer and public servant with his knowledge in Miami-Dade County, if not in the state of Florida. That's how much I trust in him.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I agree with you.

Commissioner Lago: I think this was a minor oversight, a mistake that we didn't catch, and I think that we can cure the issue very easily, just like we cured the issue in reference to the threshold size projects, which again, 140,000...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: How did that get in there?

Commissioner Lago: I don't even know. A hundred and forty thousand...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, but I'm questioning it.

Commissioner Lago: What you're telling me is you're not going to qualify somebody who has built a building that's 150,000 square feet...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You're not going to qualify.

Commissioner Lago: Or 145,000 square feet.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Keon: I...

Commissioner Lago: No, you can't...

Vice Mayor Keon: But I think that they had a different...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: They were disqualified.

Vice Mayor Keon: But, I think they had a different take on why they used those numbers. And the way the number came back, it was -- it didn't seem -- they decided to change it. But, I also -- in speaking to Peter and Cathy yesterday about it, because I had -- someone had spoken to me about the same thing. And in speaking to Peter, he told me that he thought that it was not maybe being interpreted as he had -- as it was intended and to suggest that they come and talk to him. And so, I had suggested to them that they go and sit down and talk to you about those conditions, you know, before it becomes, you know, a more heightened issue.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I would...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And as assistant...

Vice Mayor Keon: Because I think you have an answer.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: The...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Excuse me, Peter. And as Assistant City Manager, he is not under the cone.

Vice Mayor Keon: No, right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I am not under the cone.

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We are available to meet with anyone that has any comments...

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And any...

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Questions. I will say, Mr. Mayor, with full respect, we are now in a timeline where we will have significant financial penalty if we do not design, complete and deliver the project.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I agree, but I would rather have a process with integrity than a process with, in my opinion, not having integrity. And what you mentioned about AECOM, that's wrong.

Commissioner Lago: We lost that battle.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's wrong.

Commissioner Lago: We lost that battle, and we moved forward. I brought it up at that point. I said, guys, this could come back to bite us, and we lost, but it's okay. It's fine. We're moving on from that.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: But let's not repeat it.

Commissioner Lago: But, now -- that's -- and that's where you're correct. That's why we have an opportunity right now to cure this minor issue and move forward. And like the Manager says, we cannot slip one iota.

City Attorney Leen: Yes, and I need...

Commissioner Lago: This is a 20-month schedule. And Peter has done an exceptional job. I've gone over it with him on multiple occasions. You know, he has done an exceptional job and there's barely any fluff. It's a very tight schedule, and this is a building that's extremely complicated, extremely complicated. I would probably say that this is probably going to be one of the most complicated buildings with a level of scope that not many municipalities in South Florida have ever entertained building. I mean, correct me, if I'm wrong.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: That's correct, Commissioner.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And remember the first public safe -- well, the third public safety building this city built in 1974 leaked before it was opened. You know, so we are really...

Vice Mayor Keon: It was a terrible building.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Trying to do the absolute best for the Commission and for the residents in terms of a building that has -- is well-constructed, well-designed and will last a very long time.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And we have had input...

City Attorney Leen: I just -- I need to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: From the Police Department...

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And from the Fire Department...

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: As to what is needed.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Yes. And they're also...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Going to have input on the programming part of it...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Because, that is -- we know that the police and fire aren't expert in construction; our Assistant City Manager is. But, they are expert in using the building...

City Attorney Leen: Yes.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And what kinds of needs square footage...

City Attorney Leen: But I just...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And all are necessary...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What is your position on the requirement for a general contractor?

Unidentified Speaker: Well...

Commissioner Lago: No, I mean, listen, personally, I don't want to go over Peter's head, but I would strike that issue because I would hate to see a firm that doesn't have -- you're going to have a bait and switch here. Let me explain it to you, okay. You're going to have a firm that doesn't have a project manager that is qualified due to the fact of this requirement, but one of the owners is a general contract, who has a license. So, they'll put the general contractor as the project manager. When the project starts that person won't be on-site in the trailer working, because they'll actually put a project manager who probably has more experience and no-how than that person with a GC license. Just because they passed the exam doesn't mean they have more experience or no-how.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner...

City Attorney Leen: But wait, can I just add one thing?

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: The project manager...

City Attorney Leen: I need to add one thing. One thing, please. I've been trying to talk. I just have to add this because there are certain legal requirements here, because we have been threatened with a bid protest. That could occur. That will delay this project unnecessarily, and

this all should be resolved right now. And, the main point I want to raise, just so -- because the press is here, people are listening -- is that -- and this is on TV -- that I just want to talk briefly about the cone of silence. Peter is allowed to speak to vendors, so are the Commissioners. I want to make that perfectly clear. Our cone of silence allows vendors to speak to Commissioners, City Manager, City Attorney, so all this is perfectly appropriate. Mr. Navarro raised his issue and I inquired. The main issue for me, though -- and Mr. Mayor, you're absolutely right to raise the issue, because it has to be resolved and we do need a process with integrity. But, what I would ask is that a man with great integrity, Peter Iglesias, explain to us why he included those requirements, how you've adjusted them, and then I would like the Commission to be satisfied with how we're going forward. Because, otherwise, we will get a bid protest at the end and we will have to address this at the end, and I do not want what happened with -- regarding AECOM before or with the streetscape to happen again. I mean, it's -- this is -- we're looking at significant liquidated damages here if we do not get this correct. Mr. Iglesias.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Did AECOM participate in this process?

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: No, they did not. The way that the experience on the three buildings was done was proposed for an average, so that in order for one building not to skew the average, it was based on 140, and that's why it was placed at 140. However, it did seem a little convoluted, so I looked at it. We went ahead and reduced it to a building of 50,000 square feet that is either a public safety building or a secure government building. So, the contractor should have buildings -- built multistory buildings in excess of 50,000 square feet that are government buildings, so that they're used to working with government. They're secure, or public safety buildings. So, I think that opens the scope up quite a bit.

Commissioner Lago: It opens the scope up, Peter, and I agree with you...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Right.

Commissioner Lago: But, it also -- that requirement alone shrinks the pool significantly. And again, you don't want anybody just bidding on this project. You don't want me bidding on this project, if I was able to, if I didn't work for the City of Coral Gables. You want qualified corporations. So, that, to me, is not an issue. I don't have a problem with it. What I want to see is...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: We don't want to really have a condo builder bidding on the building. It's a whole different kind of building.

Commissioner Lago: Completely different situation.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: And we have a 911 Center...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, I agree. I agree.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: We have an EOC and we have this. Now, what we looked at the general contractor was we wanted to try to kick up a notch on our project manager. The project manager that we have on the Mile is a graduate engineer, by the way, and he's done a very good job. He's an engineer that's decided to go into construction, as you have, and it's worked out very well. So, just like we did on the Mile, we wanted to kick up a little bit the project requirements, because we have 20 months to do the project. If we don't finish the project in 20 months, we have substantial penalties. And so, we looked at a very experienced person. The reason -- and it doesn't have to be an owner. It doesn't have to be an officer. It's the executive project manager. So, we wanted to have somebody with oversight over the government aspects and the construction aspects of the project. Now, as you know, we have serious problems in construction right now. We have people that sit in trailers all the time that provide good PowerPoint presentations, but don't know what a two by four is. And then we have people that know what a two by four is, but can't deal with the issues of government. So, we were trying to get -- and you know -- I think, Commissioner Lago, you know it's an issue.

Great PowerPoint presentation and the project doesn't work. What do I need a PowerPoint presentation if it doesn't work?

Commissioner Lago: Let me ask you -- this is my only con...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: So, we're trying to bridge this.

Commissioner Lago: Let me just ask you...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: And that's the intent of that.

Commissioner Lago: My...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: There's no intent to give it to anyone.

Commissioner Lago: No, I know, I know.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: There's no intent to get any specific firm here. That is not the intent. The intent is to get a good building for Coral Gables on budget and not have a building fall down like the one that we have now.

Commissioner Lago: I agree with you, Peter. And I have the utmost respect for you not only as an engineer, but as an assistant city manager and what you've done in this community, okay, so...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We all do.

Commissioner Lago: And we're not implying that, under any circumstances. Let's put that on the record. My final comment is this, how do I make sure that credible companies that maybe not -- maybe don't have a project manager who has a license as a GC at the present moment...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner...

Commissioner Lago: How do I make sure that they...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: If you wish, we will cut that specification out. Just to clarify, we will increase the experience to 15 years and cut the GC out.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: If that will clarify it and -- but we do need a good project manager. We need a project manager that can handle office and field.

Commissioner Lago: No, I -- again, when the presentation...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: If not, we are...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Peter, you explained this to me...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: (INAUDIBLE).

Commissioner Lago: When the CM presentation was made, every single presentation I've done -- and there's probably been almost a hundred in my lifetime -- they require that you dictate who is the executive team that's going to be handling this project, even up to the individual who is running submittals for you. You know this very clearly. So, the owners are aware of that person's resume and capabilities. So, we should be able, at that moment, to see if that person is

capable to carry forward probably the most important project in the City's history. So, I don't have any doubt that the staff before us is going to be able to tell us, listen, we can't go with that firm or we can't go with this firm based on the individual that's going to be put forth in those presentations.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Peter.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, sir.

[End: 1:04:02 p.m.]