

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items E-10-E-14 are related
June 14, 2016
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

**Mayor Jim Cason
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada
Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick**

City Staff

**City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias
Parking Director, Kevin Kinney**

Public Speaker(s)

**Jeffrey Bass
George Hernandez
Timothy Plummer
Jack Schnettler
Jeffrey Berkowitz
Margaret (Meg) Daly
Leona Cooper Baker
Linda Dixie
Edwina Prime
Mark Trowbridge
Bradley Richter
Nicolas Cabrera
Leona H. Cooper**

City Commission Meeting
June 14, 2016

Agenda Items E-10-E-14 are related – Ordinances of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida
Requesting an amendment to the Future Land Use Map, the Zoning Map, text amendments, and
requesting review of a Planning Area Development for the proposed project referred to as
“Gables Station”.

Agenda Items E-10-E-14 are related [1:11:00 a.m.]

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting an amendment to the Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review," Division 15, "Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments," and Small Scale amendment procedures (ss. 163.3187, Florida Statutes), from "Industrial" Land Use to "Mixed Use" Land Use and removing the "Mixed Use Overlay District" Land Use for the property legally described as Tracts A and B, Block 5 and Tract 1, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Albans Park (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (Legal description on file at the City) (PZB recommended approval; Vote: 4-0)

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting an amendment to the Zoning Map of the City of Coral Gables pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review", Division 14, "Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments", from "Industrial" District to "Commercial" District and removing the "South Industrial Mixed-Use District" for the property legally described as Tracts A and B, Block 5 and Tract 1, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Albans Park (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (Legal description on file at the City) (PZB recommended approval; Vote: 4-0)

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, by amending Appendix A, "Site Specific Zoning Regulations," Section A-66, "MacFarlane Homestead," by modifying provisions for height and setbacks, and adding new provisions, for the property legally described as Tracts A and B, Block 5 and Tract 1, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Albans Park (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date. (Legal description on file at the City) (PZB recommended approval; Vote: 4-0)

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting review of a Planned Area Development (PAD) pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3,

“Development Review,” Division 5, “Planned Area Development (PAD),” for the proposed project referred to as “Gables Station” on the property legally described as Tracts A and B, Block 5, and Tract 1, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Albans Park (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (Legal description on file at the City) (PZB - Motion to Approve with Conditions failed, Vote: 3-1)

Resolution. Mixed Use Site Plan Review. (This Resolution is not for consideration at this time and will be included with the above ordinances on Second Reading, if approved on First Reading.)

A Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting Mixed-Use Site Plan Review pursuant to Zoning Code Article 4, “Zoning Districts,” Division 2, “Overlay and Special Purpose Districts,” Section 4-201, “Mixed Use District (MXD),” for the proposed project referred to as “Gables Station” on the property legally described as Tracts A and B, Block 5, and Tract 1, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Albans Park (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (Legal description on file at the City) (PZB - Motion to Approve with Conditions failed, Vote: 3-1)

City Attorney Leen: Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, “Development Review,” Division 15, “Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments,” and Small Scale amendment procedures (ss. 163.3187, Florida Statutes), from “Industrial” Land Use to “Mixed Use” Land Use and removing the “Mixed Use Overlay District” Land Use for the property legally described as Tracts A and B, Block 5 and Tract 1, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Albans Park (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. The legal description’s on file at the City. Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval by a vote of 4-0. The second item is Item E-11. It’s an Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting an amendment to the Zoning Map of the City of Coral Gables pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, “Development Review”, Division 14, “Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments”, from “Industrial” District to “Commercial” District and

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Agenda Items E-10-E-14 are related – Ordinances of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida Requesting an amendment to the Future Land Use Map, the Zoning Map, text amendments, and requesting review of a Planning Area Development for the proposed project referred to as “Gables Station”.

removing the “South Industrial Mixed-Use District” for the property legally described as Tracts A and B, Block 5 and Tract 1, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Albans Park (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. The legal description’s on file at the City. Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval by a vote of 4-0. Also, is Item E-12, which is an Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, by amending Appendix A, “Site Specific Zoning Regulations,” Section A-66, “MacFarlane Homestead,” by modifying provisions for height and setbacks, and adding new provisions, for the property legally described as Tracts A and B, Block 5 and Tract 1, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Albans Park (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date. Legal description’s on file at the City. Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval by a vote of 4-0. Next is an Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting review of a Planned Area Development pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, “Development Review,” Division 5, “Planned Area Development,” for the proposed project referred to as “Gables Station” on the property legally described as Tracts A and B, Block 5, and Tract 1, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Albans Park (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. Legal description’s on file at the City. Planning and Zoning Board, there was a motion to approve with conditions. The motion did not pass because the vote was in favor by a vote of 3-1, but it requires a vote of four to have a recommendation of approval. Nevertheless, it was a vote of three in favor, one against. Next is item E-14. This item is not being voted on today, but it’s also being consolidated for purposes of the public hearing and discussion. This is a resolution, a mixed-use site plan review. Again, it’s not for consideration today. It is a Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting Mixed-Use Site Plan Review pursuant to Zoning Code Article 4, “Zoning Districts,” Division 2, “Overlay and Special Purpose Districts,” Section 4-201, “Mixed Use District (MXD),” for the proposed project referred to as “Gables Station” on the property legally described as Tracts A and B, Block 5, and Tract 1, MacFarlane Homestead and St.

Albans Park (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. Legal description's on file at the City. This is another item where the Planning and Zoning Board, there was a motion to approve with conditions. This motion did not pass because it received three votes in favor and one against. Once again, four votes are required to pass any motion before the Planning and Zoning Board. This Commission, on these two items, E-13 and E-14, on the tradition of the City, which is also supported now by an ordinance of the City, indicates that when the Planning and Zoning Board does not receive a vote of four in favor of any motion, it's forwarded to the Commission without a recommendation and we simply note what the vote was. So, once again, it was a vote of 3-1. With that, I would just also indicate that Items E-13 and E-14 are quasi-judicial. Anyone speaking today other than City staff should be sworn in. The other items, the City treats as legislative. Nevertheless, all of them are being consolidated for purposes of the public hearing, so, you know, all of them are -- under all of them we're providing quite a bit of process and this matter will come before the Commission again in July for a second hearing. That time E-14 will also be considered. So, with that, I will turn it over to the Clerk to swear in the individuals who will be speaking in the public hearing and the applicant. Are there anyone other than attorneys?

Commissioner Lago: Mayor, if I may.

City Attorney Leen: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Mayor, if I may. Mr. City Clerk, I missed the vote on H-3, the resolution accepting the recommendation of the Chief Procurement Officer. I'd like to vote yes on that.

City Clerk Foeman: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: I would also. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Ramon.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Thank you, Mayor.

City Attorney Leen: Oh, there should be a swearing in now.

City Clerk Foeman: Would you stand up and raise your right hand, please?

City Attorney Leen: Everyone that's going to speak. You should stand up and you must be sworn in.

City Clerk Foeman: Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will provide will be the truth and nothing but the truth?

City Attorney Leen: And also, if you do want to speak, please fill out a card, if you haven't done also -- already. With that, Mr. Mayor.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Thank you, Mayor. I have a PowerPoint that I'm going to present, and then the applicant will expand on the presentation. In addition, there are some documents that are being passed to you. There's a memorandum from me to the City Manager that updates some of the neighbors. They changed some of the units, and I'll explain that in the presentation. But I thought that that was important for you to get the latest and most complete information. So, the project that we have -- and the presentation I'm going to show was updated today slightly, so it's a little bit different than the one that was posted on the website, but it's pretty much the same content. The project, as you know, is a very interesting island, for lack of a better analogy, on US 1 next to the Metrorail, east of Grand Avenue and west of Ponce de Leon. The area -- the context of the area has changed significantly in recent times as the area

towards the north is mostly mixed use. As you know, it's zoned industrial and the land use is industrial, but in our city, it means mixed use. On the other side of US 1, there's a residential neighborhood in a historic area that is also very well known in our community. The massing of the project, as shown in this image, I think that gives you a good sense of how that fits in the overall context of the site. And basically, the simplest way to describe it is as three buildings. It's not quite three buildings as two of them are joined by a garage in the bottom, but that's the massing. That is the impression that it would give you looking at it from the outside. And as you can see, the project tries to also follow some of the same design ideas and some of the same use ideas as the mixed-use overlay. As I said, the zoning map shows industrial. The future land use is also industrial. In this case, as I said, there's an overlay for mixed use. There are five requests. There's a Comprehensive Plan land use change to mixed use. There's also a Zoning Code change to commercial. There's a text amendment to the Zoning Code, which is tied to the issues of height and so on related to the mixed use. There's a PAD, a planned area development, that allows for the Commission to approve a very specific design. And then finally, there's the mixed-use site plan, which allows for the uses that are being requested. Now, an interesting aspect of the site plan is that it also includes, as part of the project commitment to the public benefit, the redesign of the area, the right-of-way along the Metrorail as the Underline. As you all know, the Underline is a very ambitious linear park that is going to tie Miami, Coral Gables, South Miami, and so on. So, there's a great opportunity here to use a building, public space and the design of those spaces to an optimum solution. That has been done with the types of public space that we had a chance to discuss about half an hour ago with the green and the arcades and so on are laid out, so we can look at it in more detail. And also, the way that the site is accessed in terms of automobiles. There's a great emphasis on pedestrians, but there's also a very precise way to deal with traffic, and there was been a traffic study review by the consultant that works for staff. One of the main issues in terms of policy is the position of height. The proposed heights are illustrated in this image, and this is what the applicant is proposing. One hundred and sixty feet for one building, the building that includes the hotel. One hundred and forty-eight feet for the rest of the project, so that is a significant decision. The project has been designed in great detail, and I think that the applicant will explain that later. But I would like to say that great

attention has been taken to creating public space, plazas, the kinds of ground level spaces that enhance the quality of life of the community. The review timeline has been rather compressed and I want to thank all the men and women who work in the Planning and Zoning Department and throughout the City for working so hard to make sure that this project was reviewed in a fast track fashion. The Development Review Committee took place in January. Then the Board of Architects had a chance to review the project conceptually, and they anticipate to review it further in the future, and that was done in April. Then the required neighborhood meeting took place in April, and the Planning and Zoning special meeting took place in May. So, all of those meetings have taken place. And in addition, we've had a chance to work with all of the staff in the City, and they've had a chance to review and comment as needed on the project. The notification was in a 1,500 foot radius, which is the requirement of the mixed use. We had that discussion earlier today, so that was done. And in terms of public notifications, I can say that two times we have sent letters to property owners. Three times the property has been posted, BRC, Board of Architects and Planning and Zoning. So, if you drive by, you can see a sign that shows that a project is coming. Four times has the project been posted on the website, and two times we've had newspaper advertisements. The request number one is the Comprehensive Plan change. And the request is to change the industrial land use to mixed use. That mixed use land use allows for the Commission to really customize the requirements. It's a very superior way to deal with mixed use, and I think you will have a chance to make decisions on that. We had a chance to review the request with the Comprehensive Plan standards, and it complies. It complies with the many standards that encourage mixed use and high quality development in the City. So, staff recommends approval as the standards of review were satisfied, and also the Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval 4-0, as you were told earlier. The request number two is a zoning map change to commercial, and that change allows for the mix use process to take place. All of these changes are really very closely related, and I think they work together in a complementary fashion. That request was also reviewed for compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, and we -- staff believes that it complies. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the zoning map amendment as all the standards of review are satisfied. And also, the Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval. Request number three is a Zoning Code

text that allows for the Commission to actually set the precise height. I mean, that is the main topic that I think is best to explain here. And the only update is that in the original submittal, there were some requests to eliminate some setbacks on Grand Avenue. That turned out to be unnecessary, so we took that out. It's fine. But however, there is a need to include the residential mixed use language and also set the maximum height. As a related issue, there was also an update on the maximum density, and that update was to make it 125. The reason is that in the original submittal, there was a hotel use that had a certain number of units, and a hotel use is not counted as part of the density. The applicant has modified the request to count those units as part of the density, and I believe they have modified somehow the hotel use. And this is something that happens normally in most projects. Projects change depending on the market. And so, my last conversation with the developer was that he was still reviewing the market needs and so on as of yesterday. So, I would expect some discussion on that topic as the hotel is one of the uses that is being requested and it was very clearly an important part of the project, but that has been modified somewhat. So, the original request was 104 units per acre. The current request is 125, and that's the update. We have reviewed this request also for compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, and we believe that it complies, as long as the Commission makes the decision -- the policy decision of setting the height. Once that's done, then there's compliance. Staff recommends approval, and the original recommendation of approval had the recommended height of 120. And what we're saying is that depending on the action of the Commission, then this request would satisfy the requirements of the Code, of the Comprehensive Plan. And the Planning and Zoning also recommended approval with said modifications. The planned area development is probably the most intensive design-oriented part of the project. And as you can see, there's a variety of public space proposals, vehicular entrances. There's also the massing of the buildings. It's all very carefully calibrated to make sure that it works well within the existing site. And there's -- in a nutshell, what I would say is that there's retail on the ground floor, as you can see. There's a buffer of landscape on US 1 -- and this is grass. This is real landscape that is right next to the arcade. So, the combination of arcade plus landscape creates a high quality pedestrian environment, and that's one of the opportunities that we have in terms of working with the open space. And then the Underline, the conceptual design on the Underline

has been discussed multiple times, and I -- and we have a memorandum from the review committee of the Underline that speaks very positively of the features that are proposed here. In terms of open space, we tried to create a simple diagram so we could map the different types of open space. Yes, arcades are included, but there's also landscape, traditional landscape, and there's also some fountains in the courtyard, and there's a variety of features that I think that the architect could explain in great detail as you request. The updated program of development as of this morning includes about 70,000 square feet of ground floor retail space, which has not changed. That was there. And it includes a variety of -- a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom units, and then the hotel use has been described as extended-stay/residential units. And I think that's an issue that you may want to discuss further with the applicant so they can provide an explanation of why that has taken place. There are 969 parking spaces, and the parking analysis takes advantage of the recently adopted shared parking provisions. So, pretty much everything that the Commission has discussed in the recent past has been incorporated into this project. This is the memo that was provided to you today that describes the change. In the original staff review, there were 147 hotel rooms. Those have been changed to 66 extended-stay units. That is the main change. The updates that I described before deal with the fact that now there's a request of 125 units per acre and also that there's no need to remove some of the setback requirements on Grand Avenue. Now, as far as the PAD, the planned area development review, there has to be a public benefit. And we have listed the benefits in the staff report. There are about two acres of accessible open space. There's a commitment to fund and design the Underline improvements in the -- adjacent to the property. There's a contribution to the trolley. There's some mobility improvements, mostly pedestrian enhancements to US 1 and Grand Avenue to be able to cross the street better. The layout of public parking around the site has been improved significantly, so basically there's a net loss of probably nothing in terms of parking. The applicant can be more precise as far as the numbers in the areas because of the rearrangement of parking. There's much improved landscape along US 1. There's bicycle parking and bicycle support facilities, and electric car charging stations, LEED Silver, as required, and arcades throughout the project. So, those are some of the public benefits as a result of the PAD. The memorandum from the Underline Design Advisory Committee is included, and

basically, it support the design and the project. The findings of fact, we reviewed the PAD with the standards called for in the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Code, and we believe that the PAD request complies with the requirements. And staff is recommending approval with conditions, and the conditions are extensive, and they're included in the staff report. And the Planning and Zoning voted 3-1, three in favor, one opposed, so it's before you without a recommendation, as the City Attorney has explained. You would need four votes for a recommendation. The conditions included in the staff report deal with parking provisions for the businesses in the area, some traffic calming studies that should be performed in a larger area to make sure that the impacts are managed, the design and construction of the Underline, the vehicular access drive across the Underline as designed in the site plan. And the applicant has proffered to comply with the conditions. The mixed use site plan is probably the opportunity to see how everything fits together. And in this image, I think one can begin to see the different elements. And what I would highlight is that in red -- in the area that is highlighted with red -- that is the hotel, which is right now being explained as extended-stay units. It is not the whole building. It's just a portion of the building. The rest of the project, there's residential, except for the parking podium, which is the area that has the arches. The portion of the project that has arches, that's parking. And then the ground level, which has the arcade, is retail, retail with access from the Metrorail side for trucks and deliveries. We have a traffic analysis and the traffic report that was included for you. It was provided fairly late in the game, but it was because of the compressed timeframe. And the findings of fact is that the mixed use site plan also complies with the standards of review. And staff recommends approval with conditions, the very extensive conditions that are in your package, and that the standards of review will be satisfied if you approve the conditions of approval. Again, the Planning and Zoning Board voted 3-1, so there's no recommendation to you. Staff has determined that the application is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. And the Planning and Zoning conditions of approval include many of the things that we've talked about before, such as the parking for businesses, traffic calming, Underline improvements, the relocation of the vehicular access to a more appropriate place. And some of the recommendations that were made is that maybe there should be some exploration of maybe underground parking if the height is an issue. And then we also

recommended there should be a close collaboration with the Design Advisory Committee of the Underline and that efforts shall be made to provide job opportunities within the project for local residents. We had recommended some actions during the Planning and Zoning review that had to be completed prior to this meeting, prior to the Commission meeting, such as review of the building height and review of traffic and civil design, landscape plans, architectural plans and -- in terms of dimensions and elevations. All of this has been complied with except for the height, which has not changed. It's still the same request that they made before. And that has to do basically with a policy choice that the Commission has to make. The staff recommended 120 because in the recent past that has been consistent with the actions taken by the Commission. However, the Commission has the authority and the ability to make whatever determination needs to be made in this case for reasons that enhance the project that are in the public interest. The request of the applicant is 160 for the building that includes the hotel, and 148, as we said before, for the buildings that don't include the hotel. And as you can see, the area with the arches, that's where the parking is. The building that has the hotel has no parking, so it comes all the way down to the ground, so it's probably, from an urban point of view, very successful. In terms of the theoretical -- in terms of the planning and urban design theory, what I would say is that generally 1 to 1 in terms of the ratio between the height of the building and the width of the street would be a good ratio in most mixed use boulevards in the great cities of the world, whether it's Paris or any other city like that. One to one is a very good ratio. One to five -- 1.5 to 1 would be the upper limit of that ratio, and that's what Merrick had originally recommended for US 1 in some of the commercial areas. One to one is about 120; 1.5 is about 160. So, those dimensions are within the reasonable interpretation of planning urban design theory, and I think that it is up to the Commission to make that policy choice. The conditions of approval include, as I said, the mobility contribution, the pedestrian improvements, emergency vehicle signal preemption contribution, Underline improvements, on-street parking, additional City reviews -- again, Board of Architect final review needs to take place -- peer reviews and inspections, landscape plan, signage, building height, parking garage design, ground floor -- many of the things that have been already addressed in terms of the drawings -- the access to the garage, the paseo design, which, again, has already been improved immensely with the project; the

pedestrian circulation, construction staging plan, traffic improvements, encroachment plan, encroachment agreement, bond to restore the property, bond for offsite improvements, construction notices, bicycle amenities, car sharing facilities, electric car charging facilities, and gateway landmarks. Many of the conditions are fairly typical; some are unique to the project. So, we've been able to optimize that design. This is the conceptual design for the Underline. Some areas are more formal, some areas are more picturesque in terms of the landscape. There's that continuous path, which is the core of the Underline. All of this is consistent with the Underline master plan. The pedestrian improvements that are being requested are enhancements of the crosswalks and sidewalks on Grand Avenue and Ponce de Leon through US 1. And then some of the typical conditions of approval prior to the CO are included, such as the Art in Public Places, underground utilities, employee parking plan, traffic improvements, bicycle and pedestrian plan, valet operations plan, taxi management plan, traffic flow modifications, right-of-way and public realm improvements, utility upgrades and publicly accessible open spaces easements, and of course, LEED certification. And just to end the discussion, as I explained, we are trying to really enhance and coordinate the design of public space with buildings. I mean, that is the way that a high quality city is built. This is an illustration of the way a courtyard works with an arcade. It wraps around. It provides an appropriate public space for the hotel entrance and for retail. And the way that that looks in 3D, as you are looking at it from US 1, as you can see, it follows the Mediterranean design that is required for this kind of approval. So, that is my presentation. If you have any questions, I am ready to answer. And I think that the applicant may want to do their presentation also.

Mayor Cason: Yeah. Why don't we have the applicant come up, and then we have some speaker cards, and then we can have our questions.

Jeffrey Bass: Mr. Mayor, members of the Commission, good afternoon. It's nice to see everybody again. Jeffrey Bass is my name. 46 Southwest 1st Street is my address, and I'm here to present on behalf of this applicant what can only be described as a transformational exercise in placemaking at the very highest level. For as long as I have been here, the land at issue has been

an asphalt surface parking lot. When we're done, we will have transformed that asphalt surface parking lot into a lovely place for people to live, work and play, a dynamic mixed-use, transit-oriented development that is exemplary by every metric and which we are very proud to present to you. This is not an easy task. The degree of difficulty is high. The lot is long and slender. It fronts US 1. It is surrounded by two major roadway intersections at Grand and Le Jeune. And if that did not increase the degree of difficulty enough, we also have this thing called Metrorail that runs right along it. So, when you look at those constraints, it's very easy to see why this property has sat as a vacant surface parking lot for so long because the transformational exercise that would need to take place here is very difficult and it requires great concert and coordination among many stakeholders, which we're proud to say we have accomplished with the plan that we're about to present. So, I'm going to just highlight a few, I think, very important facts, very important simple facts before I turn this over to Mr. Hernandez, who will walk you through the actual design, and then, Mr. Plummer, to talk to you about traffic and circulation. But these are just some very simple facts that I think provide very important context for the decision and the policy choice that you have before you. The first fact -- and it is a fact -- we are not seeking any additional FAR; we are not. A related fact -- and it is a fact -- we are not seeking any additional residential density, so not one square foot more than allowed, not one residential unit more than allowed, even taking into account the recent shift away from the hotel units towards the residential units that your Planning director just summarized. So, I think it's very important to say -- particularly, when you look at what we're giving in terms of public realm benefits and what we're asking for in terms of your approval, we're not asking for anything more readily monetizable, in terms of more rents or more square footage. The second fact -- and this is a very important fact that I'm most proud to share with you is that we are providing 47 percent of ground floor open space. Nearly half of the ground floor plan is open to the public. We're not building on it. So, just to put that number within context, again, as you think about the decision that you're going to make today, we're providing 47 percent of open space. Your Code only requires 20. We think that this is a very important fact, and it's an undisputed fact. The third fact -- and it is a fact -- our project will generate 60 percent fewer trips than an as-of-right commercial project on the very same property, 60 percent fewer. Now, this is not an example

like we've seen in the past where one must hypothesize about what could be built and perhaps have a debate about what could be built. We know what could be built. There's an actual approval that has existed on the property. And when we measure our traffic generation against the traffic generation of that approval, as Mr. Plummer will highlight for you, we come in at 60 percent less. The last fact -- and I think it's an important fact is, we have achieved our shared parking using your recently adopted shared parking ordinance, and that's a wonderful thing. So, there may be many topics of debate and disagreement in this room on a wide range of topics. But I think one thing everybody can agree about is this: Everything is better when you have a good night's sleep. And a good night's sleep was an organizing premise for our design here of this residential building because we're designing a place where there will be heads in beds adjacent to the Metrorail. And we talked about live/work/play. The live component of this application, there will be 460 residential units here, together with 66 extended-stay hotel units. We took a very long, hard look at this existing Metrorail condition and tried to fashion in the very best way we could to mitigate against the noise of the trains passing through on that rail, particularly since we're going to be asking people to be living there. Our best thinking on how to transform this from a surface parking or from the as-approved -- the approved commercial was to take the heads in the beds and move them as far away as we could on our property from the sound of the passing train. So, yes, we are asking for additional height, but I'd like to say there's absolutely a rational basis for the additional height we seek, and I will touch on it briefly and Mr. Hernandez will illustrate it for you. If you take the height of the Metrorail and you factor in the height of the train on top of the Metrorail, that's approximately 34 feet. If you add the 34 feet to the 120 that this Commission has previously approved in other locations, you come up to the heights -- the average of the heights of the buildings that we proposed, which is between 148 and 160. So, what we've done as an organizing principle is try to raise the residential level as high as we can away from the sound of the passing train and to stack the parking within the band of our property that would be adjacent to the passing train. So, that was an organizing principle of the design. You'll see that when we walk through the elevations. Again, there's a rational nexus here between the height that we seek and the existing site condition around which we're designing, and we would ask for your favorable approval of this. And as Mr. Trias mentioned,

the 1.5 ratio that George Merrick ordained as appropriate is well in keeping with what we're proposing. So, we believe that this location, given the adjacencies of the Metrorail and US 1 and Grand Avenue and Le Jeune, the height objectively is reasonable and it is eminently reasonable when you consider the fact that we're asking for additional height without asking for additional FAR, without asking for additional density. And notwithstanding the addition in height, reducing the traffic generation by a factor of 60 percent. So, we talked about live of live/work/play. Let me highlight work. This is, as the name implies, Gables Station. It is designed to leverage this location based on its proximity to the transit hub. By building and increasing residential density near the transit centers, you are fulfilling the mobility mandate in your Comprehensive Plan, which asks that you do just that so that we can get people off of the roads and into the train. And by building the residential close to the trains, it makes all the sense in the world. On the work part of live/work, we are proposing approximately 74,000 square feet of commercial, all along the ground floor to animate this. That commercial will generate jobs. Within that, we're going to have restaurants and that commercial makes this a wonderful place not only to live, but to also fulfill those daily needs without getting in the car to do so. We believe that the commercial will make this more livable to the people who live there and to the surrounding community. And of course, by the extended stay hotel, the market is at present looking for kitchenettes, where people can stay longer and they could stay longer when they come here on assignment or have to work, generating commerce. Of the live/work/play, obviously, play is always the most fun. And this project includes an unprecedented commitment to open space really in an ingenious formulation. And unless you've been out there and actually walked the site, walked the parking lot and understand the distances between the Metrorail supports, the property line, those service parking lots and Ponce, it's difficult to appreciate exactly how we're integrating the public realm into this. We have a few very simple diagrams that Mr. Hernandez will share with you that we think communicates this quite well. But what we will do when we integrate this project into the fabric of the existing conditions there is create an unprecedented amount of park space and a catalyst for the commencement of the Underline at this vitally important segment of the Underline. We believe that we're on time, with your support, to make this the first completed segment of the Underline, and it would be a majestic

one at that as part and parcel of this. This project has committed substantial funds to the buildout of a quarter-mile section of the Underline. It's really -- it's a quarter mile if you walk this property from side to side. And integrating those surface parking lots into the project without losing surface parking or parking resources for those adjacent property owners I think is no small feat. We're very proud to say that we've accomplished that. Before I turn this over to Mr. Hernandez, I would like to just highlight a couple of other facts. We have the support and we're very proud to share the support from the Lola B. Walker Homeowner's Association. We believe that their letters of support are in your materials, and I know a few members are here to address you as well. We have the support again for this project from the Todd Institute, from Washington, DC that has looked at it and found our project to be consistent with their fundamental and guiding principles. And so, given the support that we have for this project, we ask for your support as well. I would like to ask just for a few minutes for rebuttal and close up, and to address any questions that you might have. Thank you very much.

Mayor Cason: Thank you. Let's -- I have quite a few speaker cards. Please, if you could keep...

Mr. Bass: We have first our architect, and then Mr....

Mayor Cason: Oh, yes, okay.

Mr. Bass: Our architect and then our...

George Hernandez: Good morning. It's a pleasure to be here. George Hernandez, 337 Palermo Avenue. We're here to present this project for you, as you heard from Mr. Bass. I'd just like to say that along with me is -- as part of the design team as associate architects is Gensler. Representatives of that firm are here. Geomantic, who has done the landscape architecture for the firm -- for the project, and Timothy Plummer, who we'll hear from immediately after I present. So, I won't repeat some of the stats, since you have heard them now from the Planning

director and from Mr. Bass. But I would like to walk you through the project quite quickly, if I may, and talk about some of the unique features that I think make this a unique opportunity for placemaking in a unique place. The board on your left is a board that's probably quite familiar. We've been using it a lot. You've seen it a lot in the city. It really highlights the station and their -- I'm sorry the circles are not bright enough -- and their circular areas where the stations become nodes of pedestrian and transit development. The reason I like it is the white line. That white line, of course, is the transit line. It's also US 1. Because of the Underline, that white line will now be not only the major transit corridor of this metropolitan region, it will be the major recreational corridor of this transit region. And I think in Coral Gables, we have an opportunity to show our wares because as people bike and jog through that major corridor, we should be the most beautiful section of that corridor. That's what I hope this project will help to do. I'm going to just switch the boards. On the right is an enlargement of -- so, on the right is an aerial view of the property, and there's some unique physical properties that are at play here, which is why I chose it -- chose to show it along with one of your land use map. Just to orient ourselves, vertically on the left hand margin of the right hand image is Le Jeune Road. It goes from the bottom to the top. The diagonal that goes from the bottom left hand corner to the bottom right hand corner of that image, of course, is US 1 here. East of US 1 and down towards the bottom right hand corner of the image is the MacFarlane Homestead District, a nationally registered history district of the African-Bahamian community. As Mr. Bass said, we've reached out to this community. We're working with them, and we want to memorialize some of the history and traditions of that community in some of the public spaces of the project. I'll speak about that in just a moment. So, this is the property in question, and it is bracketed by Ponce as Ponce turns north-south away from its parallel orientation on Le Jeune and heads north-south, and then of course, the triangle that is cut by the intersection of Grand Avenue and Le Jeune Road. The property is four point -- nearly four and a half acres. And when you consider it adjacent with the public lands that are on the west side of the Metrorail that are in a way visually linked to our property, it is nearly six and a third acres altogether. So it's a very large site when you think of the public lands in adjacency to the private lands, the properties for the site. And I say that because much of our design work is about stitching the public lands and the site itself to create

for what the public will use as one grand urban park. That's what I think is unique about the project. I want to go through the land use map for just a second because this is, again, quite a unique property. The site in question is right here. And if we go down the highway southwards from Le Jeune south, there are a series of one-, two-, and three-story commercial buildings. They stop on Suarez Street, which is the first north-south street that cuts through LeJeune and Ponce, and after that is the Bermuda Village, so it's a multifamily neighborhood. And after the Bermuda Village, right on Riviera as we're driving south on the waterway is the first single-family house. So, there's a natural diminution of scale that happens there, and it's a classic sort of transit theory, from the single-family house to the multifamily Bermuda Village, to the one-, two-, three-story residential functions, to the site proper, okay. And then on the north side of the site, you can see that Coral Gables has an irregular edge. The site is almost at the very eastern tip of Coral Gables's limit. Now what's special about the site, even though you've heard, it's a 1,200 square foot long, 175-foot deep site, so it's a very long, narrow site. It is where the land swells. US 1, as you can see, takes a slight curve, the Metrorail tilts, and we get, when you consider this site and the adjacent site west, which is public lands, we get about 330 feet of open -- what is now open space, what will be configured as a great park, okay. So, the area of that park that I spoke to you, when you fold public lands and private lands together, is about 6.3 acres. Of that 6.3 acres, when everything is folded together, only a third will be built. That is unprecedented. It will in fact feel like a public project in terms of its footprint. And if you consider our site and only our site, which is 2.85 acres -- I'm sorry, 4.5 acres, then of our site, 47 percent and only 47 percent -- 47 percent will be open, which again, is unprecedented. Your Code requires 20 percent open ground space. This is nearly half open ground space on the private section. When you fold private and public because we are fostering a site across that invisible property line and trying to fashion a beautiful place for this community, one-third of it will be built; two-thirds of it will be green urban paved space, urban living rooms, very much like the discussion you were having right before this agenda item came up. And that's what we really feel is very exciting, and we're honored to present this project for you. Now, the premise that Mr. Bass was speaking of about a good night's sleep is probably best illustrated here because it's the only ask that we are really here to make. The only ask is the height ask. And as

you've heard, the height ask is well within Merrick's 1.5 to 1 ratio, but those drawings talk about what could one do given the types of functions one could have next to a rail. So, these are conflicting adjacencies. Clearly, a single-family house, if we were making this site as a single-family neighborhood, would be a conflicting adjacency. A three-story apartment building or four-story apartment building -- we all remember when there were four-story apartment buildings there. In fact, when the Metrorail in '81, there were a series of affordable four-story apartment buildings that were there for quite a while longer until those came down. A four-story apartment building would also be a conflicting adjacency. What we've done is in the bottom of the sheet -- and we've taken the one function that is compatible with the noise of a passing railcar, which is station cars, and we have placed the station cars essentially, as you can see in this diagram, in the general area where the cars are moving. So, on the ground floor, of course, for urban vitality and so forth, we have retail all over the site. Then we have five stories of stationed and parked cars level approximately with the passing car. And then all the living quarters are above that in the two residential buildings. Now, to illustrate a little bit of how close the rail is to that part or that edge of the project, it's closer than the back wall of this room. The back wall of this room is 50 feet. If you imagine 34 feet of the 50 feet, that's the shortest distance between the passing car and the back wall of the project. We need to get above it. Otherwise, the project will be dysfunctional and obsolete from the moment it opens, and it will be inhumane to have people living there. That's the reason for the ask. A little more about the site because that was about the vertical organizing principle of the site. It's to get above the rail. Now, let's talk about the horizontal and the notion of the park. So, on the top left hand drawing, you see the public lands, which I mentioned before, the 2.85 acres. On the top right hand drawing, you see the public lands folded into the private lands, which makes that 6.3 acres of totality. This blue stripe that you see going through the site is in fact the Metrorail. And the diagram below shows the footprint of the now passport office and our three buildings. So, you can see in light and dark green, again, the verdant character of this project that is, in a sense, coopting public and private lands to create this destination or this place. The board on your right shows a comparison -- a scale and comparison of the 2.85-acre park, which we'll call Gables Station Park for the moment, or maybe we'll call it the Underline Park, with other well-known

parks in the City. For example, the Ponce Hartnett Park, or the Matheson Terrace Park, and this will be the largest one of them. This is 2.85 acres, okay. You've also heard that we are underwriting the expense of the Underline in that park, which will really make this project come together at once. So, this is the ground floor plan of the project. You have a more updated version of it on page 21 of your booklet. The reason for that is we had a printing glitch this morning, so I apologize for that. But I can still point out all of the -- and below it is -- below that is, in three parts, the landscape plan. The reason I don't want to talk about the landscape plan is that the colors came out gray, and the point is that we're turning black asphalt to green space, so it doesn't make my words resonate. So, I'll put the old plan up just for color reference, and the appropriate plan that you have in your booklet below it, even though the color on the lower plan is off. You can see, again, the site is 1,200 feet long, 175 feet wide. We have broken it in cross grain passages, one here and one here to module a more humanistic scale of the urban land. Those are approximately 325 feet by 150 foot mini blocks, we call them, or buildings. And between them, there is a very verdant series of spaces. Now along the existing streets, which are Ponce, US 1 and Grand Avenue that immediately border the site, we are proposing continuous arcades. All of the arcades are taller than this Commission hall is tall, to give you a sense of reference and the quality of spaces. So, the other thing that we're doing -- and you can see that maybe more clearly on the plan below -- is we're trying to pull pedestrians away from the cars on US 1. We have very broad sidewalks on US 1 that were part of this public realm improvement and public realm spaces. But what we're doing is we're planting, from curb to arcade, green space on US 1, and you can see it on the lower diagram. So, if I'm driving on US 1, I get to look at trees, hedges, shrubs, palms and so on. And if you're walking on US 1, you get to be under the shadow of an arcade or away from the rain. It's a perfect kind of mixture of how to deal with that urban condition, and we're doing that on the three sides of the project. On the west side of the project, we are introducing a new lane. That lane is going to be 100 percent paved and curbless, very much like the Giralda project that the City is -- restaurant row project that the City is engaged in. And that lane is actually quite small. It's a two -- one -- two-way, one lane going one way, another lane coming the other lane, and a series of parallel parking. It'll be planted and shaded. And that's where most of the activity is going to be. So, there's no back

to this project. US 1 is a front, Ponce is a front, Grand Avenue and Le Jeune is a front, and our lane -- because the lane is now adjacent to the Underline -- is another front. We really had to negotiate where to pull the trucks and the waste and all of that. But all sides are fronts, and we envision a bike rider or a jogger swerving in and getting a coffee, or taking a little break in Station Square that I'll talk to you about in a second. So, that formulates the principles of those three footprints. And 100 percent of the footprints, absent the truck bays, is commercial. The whole ground floor is a vibrant, commercial ground floor. Now, on the other side of the room -- and I should have mentioned this earlier -- I've got some renderings, so they can just -- you can just enjoy them as I speak. This one is showing the swath of space of the park and the integration of this whole parcel of land, which includes this buildings, the green space, the rail with the Underline, and the park. And as I said, this will produce an area of 6.3 acres that is one-third built.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Let me ask you a question about that area that you just pointed to.

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Bring that back up. There is -- I keep thinking that is the Epicure. It's not the Epicure. It's the furniture store now.

Mr. Hernandez: It's a Robb & Stucky now.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Robb & Stucky. There's parking in front right now.

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Who controls that parking? Is that the County?

Mr. Hernandez: That's metered. It's metered parking.

Vice Mayor Quesada: That's City.

Mr. Hernandez: It's City, yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Okay. And let me ask you another question. That parking -- and I forget from the application from what I was looking at, one of the items that we're agreeing on -- or we're not agreeing, we're voting on today is staff is giving a recommendation to agree to remove that parking?

Mr. Hernandez: Personally, there is a diagram, Commissioner, that shows exactly the answer to the question you're looking for.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And where is that diagram?

Mr. Hernandez: It's two sheets further in the presentation.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Okay, alright. I'll wait for it. Thank you.

Mr. Hernandez: Okay.

Commissioner Keon: I don't think it's on that side of the street, though. Is it on that side of the street?

Mr. Hernandez: It's between -- well, let me go to the diagram.

Commissioner Slesnick: There isn't any parking in front of Robb & Stucky right now, is there?

Mr. Hernandez: They're a metered...

Commissioner Keon: On the side street.

Mr. Hernandez: They're metered spaces.

Commissioner Slesnick: No.

Commissioner Lago: Mr. Hernandez, I know...

Commissioner Slesnick: This is on Le Jeune. Isn't that Le Jeune heading...

Commissioner Keon: No, on Ponce it is.

Commissioner Lago: It's on Ponce. And Mr. Hernandez, I know I'm getting ahead of myself, but since the Vice Mayor mentioned this, are you also going to discuss the property owners on Ponce?

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Because I know that there was a sticking point...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: With the previous approvals that were...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes, yes.

Commissioner Lago: And can you also address one thing since we're asking question and you brought it to my attention because you were talking about as you drive through US 1 you're

going to see green space. One of the main concerns for this Commission that has been brought up over and over again is we want to avoid similar instances like the approved Aloft. And I hate to pick on the project, but you know, we want to approve -- excuse me, we want to avoid that type of scenario from happening on multiple fronts.

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Not only the green space that's nonexistent, but I'm talking about the location of the property in reference to the street.

Mr. Hernandez: Street, yes. We have a diagram for that.

Commissioner Lago: Okay. That's important because I want to clarify that because I've...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Gotten several residents and business owners who have called me and said, you know, let's never allow that to happen ever again.

Mr. Hernandez: Right, yes. Thank you for the question.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mr. Hernandez: And I have a diagram to illustrate it. So, this -- the purpose of this board was to show the difference from surface parking now and surface parking in the future, okay. That's the purpose of this board. Of course, this is our site. And 100 percent of the site, except for this small, one-story building, is surface parking. And this is the public lands portion, the other twin, let's say, of the site. And there are four parking lots there; one, two, three, four, and the little one, so actually, four and a half, let's say. The little one for the passport office -- this is the

passport office. Since I'm only coloring surface lots, that's why the passport office is just an outline, not a change in the color, okay. So, this lot -- and we're taking this out of order, but that's okay. This lot in our surveys, and most people would agree, at least currently is way underutilized. There are never any cars parked there. The summation of cars for the next three lots is about 80 spaces are being put into the project, some of which -- and there's a gentleman here who's the veterinarian of the animal hospital on Ponce will speak to this as well as he testifies. I mean, we've been in conversations with him and we want to work this out to serve everyone. But there are some spaces -- his name is Dr. Richter, I should say. There are some spaces that for the employees of those commercial establishments that are being included into our parking garage. So, the employees of those people will not park on the street. And then the remaining spaces have been accommodated in a proposed parking lot, which you can see at the bottom here -- at the bottom there. That the great virtue of that -- well, they've been accommodated there, and they've been accommodated here. Do you see this dark, black line here along the new lane? Let's call it Gables Station Drive. There is parallel parking along Gables Station Drive, which when you look at the newly created parallel parking on Gables Station Drive, plus this lot, which is a consolidation of these three lots, plus what's in the parking garage, we're at a net zero of change in the parking provided. Okay, so we're at net zero. But more importantly, the lot -- and this goes to other discussions that we've had recently and I'm sure we'll have today, the parking lot, which is painted in the lower image white, probably should be a light green because we're doing research in permeable paving patterns and methods and materials because we want it, when it's empty, to feel like a park. I don't know, maybe some of you don't remember it, but kind of like the old Parrot Jungle parking lot used to feel, not Parrot Jungle Island, but Parrot Jungle. It was asphalt, but those glorious fichus trees made it the most beautiful place. So, we haven't finished that design yet, but we want it to be a very green surface parking lot. But the net loss is zero, as I just explained. I hope that answers the question.

Commissioner Lago: It does.

Mr. Hernandez: Thank you. Alright, so we can just throw this out of order. It doesn't matter. Robert, I need the other part of the -- I need the board back. Okay, one more board after that, the two site plan boards. Thank you. So, again, if you refer to color to the two sheets on the top and for design on the three sheets on the bottom -- and these are just very simple concepts. You can see that the safest place to put the truck lanes is off the new Gables Station lane because trucks can't come in from US 1, and Ponce is too short and too much stacking, and Grand is too short and too much stacking. So, because of that and in consultation with Tim Plummer, we've devised these angled backup sort of parking -- truck parking. It's on the bottom. Truck parking, which actually because of the serrated inverted bay window conceal the garage doors. It's kind of, you know, a visual trick. They conceal the garage doors in the shadows, and it's the easiest maneuver for a truck and it keeps the trucks coming into a place where the traffic volume is low anyway. So, that was the solution of solving the trucks. There is, I should also say, on US 1 -- Mr. Plummer will address this -- there is a deceleration lane that we have cut out of our property again to enter the principle entry -- vehicular entry into the project. Again, sort of an answer to that notion of this is half the amount of traffic of an as-of-right previously-approved project. We really want to make this a project about quality of life with a capital Q. So, now if I may just move to the elevations, only briefly, and then I'm ready to wrap up and I apologize. So, these are the elevations and they're spread across two sheets. But you can see the south building, which contains the extended stay hotel, along with residential units, and that's the building that has no parking in it. So, from this point in the project here, which is the southern end of the middle building forward, there is not one car parked. And that's -- we've been talking about urbanism and urban planning theory. To take a project and at least take a portion of the project and rid it of the stacked parking does amazing things for the ability to mold and shape and create urban space and urban experiences because the history of making urban space only recently has dealt with cars. And we can do that, but it's a plus when a canvas is large enough you can rid part of the canvas of the garage function and we've done that. That's why there's -- that's one of the reasons why we have five levels of parking on the remaining portion. The other reason for the five levels of parking, we've already discussed, to get the residential units above the moving train. So, you can see here in the elevations, and more importantly here, if I may call your

attention to this perspective, that the buildings are organized as three units or three mini blocks. And massing wise, they're like a letter H, with the hyphen moved asymmetrically off center. This does great things, as you can see, to sculpt the experience of the project from US 1. And you can just imagine the kind of shadows early morning or late night shadows -- because the sun hits here -- that this would cast, therefore even further sculpting the appearance of these three buildings marching down US 1. The same thing happens on the Ponce, although the sculpting is less aggressive on Ponce. The reason for that is that the US 1 frontage is the side that receives the sun. The pools will be placed there. And the northern façades, which are mostly in shade, need less articulation and less sculpting. So, you can read that here in elevation, but I think it's much more successful in that drawing, in the three-dimensional drawing. Also, in the three-dimensional drawing, you see that the very tip of the project, which has a hemicycle inspired by this hemicycle that we're having this meeting in, except it's different because it's planted. So, the hemicycle has -- there's a theory of hanging gardens or cascading gardens because all of the pool terraces will have palms and bougainvillea on pergolas. So, as you drive US 1 and you look up, you will see a continuous pergola for two-thirds of the project, hopefully, with beautifully flowering purple bougainvillea and Canary Island date palms punctuating that view. And then along the hemicycle, the piers on the first floor of the hemicycle become planters that will have sea grape trees against the sky and what will be a dining terrace at the apex of that project. This will be a destination for Coral Gables. And most importantly, it pulls our project away from that southernmost corner, as you can see there in that drawing, allowing the tip of this project the room to breathe that it currently has because there is a featured element here. There is a kind of rotunda there, and by pulling back, we let that rotunda serve as a marker on US 1. The columnar -- I mean, the arcaded screen that Mr. Trias referred to here is an element of screening the parking garage, which is historically associated with train station architecture, and at least here in America. If you know Penn Station, which sadly was demolished in the '60s, or Central Station, the language of an arcaded screen was part of those train stations and we're evoking that architecture here as well, along with the lower arches of the commercial. So, these are just a couple of diagrams to explain a little bit of some of your questions. And there are public realm diagrams. They talk about sidewalk widths. I'll just move this so you see another image of the

project. They talk about sidewalk widths. And so, I'll just go through two of them, if I may, for a second. These numbers may not be totally visible to you, but US 1, as we know has a hundred foot right-of-way. And when you consider the width of our setback, which is a planted setback, nearly 30 feet and the depth of our colonnade, which is 14 feet, we're going to have 42 feet of sidewalk space and/or green space between the US 1 curb and the back wall of that arcade, which, again, is an incredibly generous dimension. The Ponce sidewalk is similar, so I'm giving you these as cuts through the three existing streets, Ponce, US 1 and Grand. So, the US 1 depth of sidewalk is the same as the US 1. It's going to be in the neighborhood of 42 feet. The sidewalk on Grand Avenue is even more generous. It sets back 85 feet 6 inches from the curb of Grand, so nearly, you know, like almost 100 feet, plus then the right-of-way. So, the buildings pull away from all of the curbs and sponsor through the arcades that wrap those edges of vibrant life. And then the most vibrant life, of course, is what would have otherwise been the back until the Underline gets built, and then it's a different kind of front, one that you can access from a pedestrian point of view and a bicycle point of view and so on. So, we really see this as a very vibrant project. This is probably the featured space of the project, and it's a large square between the southernmost building and the middle building. The dimensions of the square open to the sky by pulling the park spaces to two-thirds of the project, although it's almost 40 percent of the 1,200 foot frontage. The dimensions of the square are 175 feet by 100 feet open to the sky, but the 100 feet is bracketed by 14-foot arcades on either side, so it becomes almost like 140 by 175. And in that -- and Ramon Trias, your Planning director, showed some images, but there is a grand colonnaded connection between the middle building and the south building for people that park in the parking garages to enter the project on foot through this grand stair, not unlike the two stairs in the Biltmore Hotel. And there are a series -- there's a raised lawn, where you can have coffee. There are a series of white noise sources, like bubbling water fountains and so on. It will be a very beautiful urban public urban living room. That's this space. And the -- oh, and I might say because I mentioned earlier, the Bahamian -- the African-Bahamian neighborhood that is across from the highway has been -- those people have been here a very long time. In fact, if you read Arva's book on George Merrick, he called them the way showers because they showed him the way to build in this climate. So, as a testimony to the technology

of construction which that community brought to South Florida, one of the technologies, one of the construction techniques that they brought here was the handling of coral stones. They were very fine coral stonemasons. In fact, they did most of the coral stone work in Vizcaya. There's a beautiful John Singer Sargent watercolor of these African-Bahamian men resting under the shade of a mangrove tree and a little tidal pond cooling off as a break between the time they were working on the walls, and I would urge you to buy the watercolors of John Singer Sargent and see that. But we are going to feature that material and that constructive technology in that space and other things that we're working with the community on, A, because coral stone is part of the name of our community, Coral Gables, but B, because these are the people that brought the technology to build in that stone to George Merrick's attention, so we're doing that here. Then lastly, these have to do with lines of sight. This is a view of that space where you see the rail above you, you're approaching it, and you can see the grand arcade at the top, these little pavilions, which are ways of getting into the hotel and the apartment building. In case it's raining, you get dropped off there. That's the drop-off point, in a sense, or a veil, giving privacy to the courtyard space above. And of course, all of it is open to the public. But the last two things I want to talk about are lines of sight and silhouettes. So, you see on the right a silhouette drawing of the project. These are the single-family houses of the neighborhood represented by the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association. This is US 1. This is our project, and you see the extension up. The gray is the parking area that we need to do, so that first dwelling unit is at least 66 feet above the ceiling of the moving train car. This is now the great swath of space where there's a kind of partnership between public and private so that Ponce and the entirety of the public lands and the new lane and the lands of our project will operate as one great destination. And then this is the existing Gables Ponce project, which is a hundred feet high of habitable. We're 148 of habitable for the reasons we explained. And this is a line of sight drawing from the single-family neighborhood that is behind the commercial. So, if you go west on Le Jeune -- this is Havana Harry's as a point of reference. So, this is Havana Harry's. There's a single-family neighborhood there. This is Gables Ponce. This is the project. This is Gables Station project. There -- because of the height of Gables Ponce, the project will not be

visible from the houses behind Havana Harry's. I'm open for questions if you have any, but I thank you for the opportunity presenting this project.

Mayor Cason: Thank you. You're going to have Mr. Plummer as part...

Mr. Bass: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Of your presentation?

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Plummer, were you sworn in?

Timothy Plummer: Yes, I was.

City Attorney Leen: Okay.

Mr. Plummer: Good afternoon. My name is Tim Plummer. I'm the president of David Plummer and Associates, with offices here at 1750 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, in the City Beautiful. I will promise one thing today. My presentation will be much shorter than George's. I will get to the traffic points right away. I'll be taking a few minutes to discuss the site access and circulation, the Ponce access point, the traffic impact study, and finally, the trip generation for this project. George has put the site plan up here for me. As you can see, it is a very unique site, very challenging site from a traffic engineering standpoint. What we are looking at for this project is trying to come up with an access and circulation plan that takes advantage of our surrounding roadway grid. We don't want to concentrate all the inbound traffic to one or two places and all the outbound traffic to other places. So, this access plan is based on two-way circulation, not only at the access points, but within the circulation of the site. Access on the south on US 1, on the east on Ponce, on the north on Ponce, which actually has been relocated over here, and on the west on Grand Avenue. So, our access plan is based on two-way circulation to make sure we're not concentrating trips just to one or two locations. There is a

southbound right turn lane at the driveway on US 1. That is to make sure we have extra capacity at our main entrance. We want to make sure we prevent any vehicles spilling back onto US 1 that would block the through lanes. This site plan -- and it's okay to have this one up -- the original commercial project that was approved had a signalized connection underneath the Metrorail to Ponce. This plan also has a connection onto Ponce. After the Planning and Zoning Board meeting and a meeting with the Underline folks, we had been asked to see if we can get that Ponce connection moved further east. Now the history of this is, back with the commercial project, was when we met with Miami-Dade Transit, about where we have this located now, there is two tracks there and Miami-Dade County uses those tracks for maintenance. They offload vehicles. They can maintain vehicles there. So, they told us in the original project, we need it about 500 feet away. Well, we went and met with them. We continued to meet with them and explained the project, and now we've gotten Miami-Dade Transit to agree to move that -- that we can move the connection from where it was previously located west to the east. Why is that important for the project? Now, it aligns with our parking garage access. That simplifies our access and our circulation to the site. Quickly on the traffic study. We submitted a traffic study in April, seven intersections, AM and PM peak hour conditions. The project is in the City's grid, so it is exempt from traffic concurrency. We've been reviewed by the City and their independent consultant, Atkins. We just received those review comments on our study last night. I spent some time going through them. There are some very minor issues that we need to address, and these minor issues will not change the outcome of the traffic study. Actually, the traffic study that they reviewed in April, the development program has since changed a little bit and the new program has 15 percent less traffic than what they have reviewed. Again, even though the study is in the grid, it does meet all of the City's level of service standards. And lastly, I want to talk about the trip generation for the site. The previously-approved commercial project for the PM peak hour had net new trips two-way of 780 trips. The project that's in front of you today, we're down to about 330. That's about 60 percent less traffic impact than what has been approved previously on this site. And I was thinking about this last night and in my nearly 30 years -- and it's hard to say I've been doing this almost 30 years -- this is probably the largest

percentage decrease in vested vehicular trips that I've been associated with, so this is a significant reduction in traffic impacts.

Mayor Cason: Let me ask you a question. The change from the hotel to extended-stay, what impact would that have on traffic?

Mr. Plummer: Really, no traffic. We've got that included in what those numbers you see there today, Mr. Mayor.

Commissioner Lago: Mayor, if I may, just two simple questions. I imagine you weren't listening to the first part of our Commission meeting when we discussed the issue with Starbuck's on US 1. They're having some stacking issues currently because of the design of their surface parking lot ingress and egress. Can you give me some assurances that we're not going to suffer the same issues here in regards to what's being proposed?

Mr. Plummer: Absolutely. The big difference? The southbound right turn lane, very critical for our project. We don't want to block those through lanes. And I think, as you probably know, Commissioner Lago, I've worked with the City trying to resolve some of those issues. We've got a couple of plans that we have under consideration, but those are issues that need to get cleaned up.

Commissioner Lago: So you feel...

Mr. Plummer: The southbound right turn lane makes the big difference. FDOT will want it. It's a good thing for the project. The last thing we want to do is what's happening on Starbuck's further north of us, which is having our project spill back and block the through lanes.

Commissioner Lago: So you're using that proposed internal road -- I think you called it a -- what was the internal road?

Mr. Plummer: You're talking about the southbound right turn lane?

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mr. Plummer: Yes -- or you're talking about on the north side...

Commissioner Lago: No, no, no.

Mr. Plummer: Of the project?

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mr. Plummer: Right.

Commissioner Lago: You're going to use that as some stacking -- as potential stacking...

Mr. Plummer: That will have stacking as well. The beauty of the project and one of the challenges and why the Ponce connection is materially important to the success of the project is we want to have -- give drivers options, different ways to come in and out. If we really only had the US 1 access, it would make it much more challenging to keep the stacking onsite. But when you can come on and off the site Ponce north, Ponce east, Grand and US 1 and we use our complete street grid, that's what really helps. Starbuck's, there's only one way in and one way out.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, hold on a second. I'm looking at page 21 of our packet.

Commissioner Keon: Me too, yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah. I think it's the same one that -- if you can take off the chart -- do you mind just for a second? I think it will be easier. And the one behind that as well.

Commissioner Slesnick: Does the Metrorail...

Vice Mayor Quesada: There you go.

Commissioner Slesnick: Really curve like that on the left hand side?

Commissioner Keon: Yeah.

Commissioner Slesnick: Does it?

Commissioner Keon: Well, the highway does.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, coming -- if I'm coming southbound and I'm going to go into the project -- or right now, if I'm going to go into Coral Gables, I could turn at the right of that diagram and you go in and you go through that fountain circle on Ponce.

Mr. Plummer: The roundabout here, yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, so if I'm coming south...

Mr. Plummer: Right.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I can go in through there. I guess I'd wrap around, and then I'd go into the project.

Mr. Plummer: Correct.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Correct. Or the other option is -- and I guess clarify this for me -- that -- there's an entrance right there, okay, and then there's the entrance on...

Commissioner Lago: Grand.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Grand.

Mr. Plummer: Grand Avenue here.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Got it.

Mr. Plummer: This is a right in, right out only on Grand.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Okay. I just wasn't sure if the one in the middle was what you were referring to, but I get it now.

Mr. Plummer: Yes.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And Mr. Mayor, you'll remember that Atkins & Associates is our -- Atkins is our traffic consultant. And Jack is here in the audience in case you have any questions regarding the report that is submitted as a part of the PowerPoint presentation.

Commissioner Lago: I do. I have some -- I have just one main question.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Would you like him to come forward?

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, for sure. I would to, please.

Mr. Plummer: You want me to finish up so I can sit down?

Mayor Cason: Why don't you finish up.

Mr. Plummer: Alright.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Quick question for you. If I'm coming south and I turn in here -- and this is the garage entrance here, correct? Yes?

Mr. Plummer: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Do you think it's a possibility that there would be stacking if you probably got four or five cars coming in here? Because that's the problem that we're having with the Starbuck's on US 1 because there is -- how many cars do you guys think they stack on that US 1 Starbuck's?

Commissioner Lago: You mean just on U...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Ten cars?

Commissioner Lago: On US 1?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Before it starts affecting the traffic flow on US 1. Ten cars, eight cars?

Commissioner Lago: Oh, within the confines of Starbuck's?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, within the confines...

Commissioner Lago: Probably about ten to twelve.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Right, so -- and we have that all the time. So, the question is how many cars can stack coming in here, assuming there's traffic of cars coming out, and I guess you can't make that left there. Does that make sense?

Commissioner Keon: You have a deceleration lane there.

Mr. Plummer: So, what we have with this garage is you have to go up the ramp, Commissioner Quesada, to get your access, and anything that has to do with the retail component should come up the ramp until you have to stop.

Commissioner Lago: So you're stacking within the building itself?

Mr. Plummer: Absolutely.

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Mr. Plummer: Absolutely. Now, my concern would be, again, if we didn't have the connection to Ponce and we had east connection to Ponce, Grand Avenue and US 1 only, we couldn't use -- if we didn't have the Ponce connection, that would be an issue. We have the Ponce connection, and that's why it makes the project materially better.

Commissioner Slesnick: How long is that deceleration lane?

Mr. Plummer: I believe it's somewhere around 225 feet.

Commissioner Slesnick: So that will hold...

Mr. Plummer: It's about ten cars.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: About ten cars.

Commissioner Lago: Pretty significant.

Mr. Plummer: That's ten cars on US 1.

Commissioner Lago: Just going off of what the Vice Mayor said, I want to make sure that the stacking within is as long as possible, you know, and just take that into consider. Could I ask our consultant just one question?

Mr. Plummer: Sure.

Jack Schnettler: Good afternoon. Jack Schnettler, with Atkins, offices at 2001 Northwest 107th Avenue, in Doral.

Commissioner Lago: How are you, sir? Thank you for being here.

Mr. Schnettler: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: I have the utmost faith in Mr. Plummer, but I just want to confirm some numbers because when you start throwing around 60 percent reduction in traffic, that's significant. You know, you looked at the numbers. You analyzed the numbers, the 60 percent reduction in regards to traffic. You concur with his numbers, with his findings?

Mr. Schnettler: We saw those earlier today, and they're -- it's a reasonable calculation.

Commissioner Lago: Is there anything else that maybe you can expound on that? Or do you feel comfortable with that?

Mr. Schnettler: Well, I mean, these calculations are based on methodologies that involve data collected through the International Transportation Engineering Profession traffic generation book. And in those, there's established ranges for these different types of land uses, and that's where we rely on. And so the calculations he made are reasonable and follow those guidelines.

Commissioner Lago: Perfect. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: I appreciate it.

Mayor Cason: Anything else, Mr. Plummer?

Mr. Plummer: Nope.

Commissioner Slesnick: Mr. Plummer.

Mr. Plummer: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: Over on Grand Avenue -- so it's a right into the complex...

Commissioner Keon: And a right out.

Commissioner Slesnick: But coming on the other side, it's only a right out?

Commissioner Keon: It's a right in and a right out.

Mr. Plummer: That is correct. The Grand Avenue access point is a right in only and a right out only.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Commissioner Keon: You have to make sure you make that right out a really only right out.

Mr. Plummer: Yes, and that's why -- and that's a good point. And the previous project, it was talked about making -- allowing the left out. We met with the County and so forth. It was denied. So, we've got a raised island there to try and force people to the right.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, thank you.

Mayor Cason: And you'll have no left turn...

Mr. Plummer: No left turn signs...

Mayor Cason: Signs and so on.

Mr. Plummer: Will be up there.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Mr. Plummer: So, it will be enforced by the City police department.

Commissioner Keon: Well, we know our community, and it's not so compliant with signage, so it's almost -- it's very good if you...

Mr. Plummer: I understand.

Commissioner Keon: Make it such that...

Mayor Cason: All signs in Florida...

Commissioner Keon: You can't help it.

Mayor Cason: Are suggestions.

Commissioner Keon: They're just suggestions.

Mr. Plummer: Thank you very much.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Mr. Plummer: I'll be here for any questions that you have.

Mayor Cason: Alright, let's -- thank you. Let's start with Jeff Berkowitz.

City Attorney Leen: So please remember, during the public comments section, everyone that speak, you're given three minutes, unless the Mayor extends that time.

Mayor Cason: You were all sworn in before?

City Attorney Leen: You need to be...

Jeffrey Berkowitz: I am not sworn in, Mr...

Mayor Cason: Okay.

City Attorney Leen: If you haven't been sworn in, please indicate so you can be sworn in, and please state your name and your address.

Mr. Berkowitz: My name is Jeff Berkowitz. I reside at 160 Edgewater Drive, Coral Gables, Florida.

City Clerk Foeman: Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will provide will be the truth and nothing but the truth?

Mr. Berkowitz: So help me God.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Mr. Berkowitz: My name is Jeff Berkowitz. I own this property. I own four and a half acres between Ponce and Le Jeune on US 1. Over here is a rendering of the project that was approved by this Commission that we have the right to develop as a matter of right. I -- it is my opinion that the project that is before you today is a vastly superior project for many reasons. You will note that there are no breaks. We are solid for almost 1,500 feet of frontage. From the visibility standpoint, we are 100 feet tall or 120 feet with architectural elements. The residences -- the rental residences to the rear can't see over us or through us. In the particular design, which, in many respects, George, I think is brilliant, gives you that view corridor for those residents. And what's most important, you will notice that the public space -- the open space on the ground level is nonexistent. In the plan that is before you, almost 50 percent of the open space at the base of that project is open. And when you combine that with the Underline and when you combine that with the opportunity to take that portion or some portion of the City/County parking lot that exists on Ponce de Leon, you have the opportunity not only to have a world-class development at what should be the entrance to Coral Gables, and not a parking lot with hundreds of Audis,

which is the state of that parking lot since I moved to Coral Gables some thirty odd years ago. You have a need for additional height. Why? They're not asking for one square inch of additional development property. In order to do that and to provide open space, they've got to go a little bit higher. Well, what are they accomplishing? They're opening up the Underline and the new City park into a promenade and a pedestrian-friendly opportunity that's a major plus for the community. In addition, they're giving those residents who live in the apartment buildings on Ponce de Leon Boulevard a view corridor. They're not -- they're no longer blocked by this solid, massive building. And as Tim Plummer suggested, when we were before you for approval, there was some controversy with the -- with our friend, the vet on Ponce de Leon. Our traffic flow required a signal. We had a signal warrant study done. There was no option other than to signalize Ponce de Leon to deal with the volume of traffic. You've got a 60 percent reduction in traffic. I think that buzzing I heard meant that my time is up. But I'd like to urge you to approve what I consider to be a world-class project to be located at the very entrance to Coral Gables that's going to make all of us proud to be here and to be residents in the future. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Meg Daly. Meg Daly. There you are.

Margaret (Meg) Daly: Hi, Mayor, Vice Mayor.

Mayor Cason: How are you?

Ms. Daly: Commissioners. I'm so excited to be in my hometown. My name's Meg Daly, and I'm founder and president and CEO of Friends of the Underline. Who knew that two years ago when I came to you and presented the idea for the Underline -- and it was just an idea and you all

supported our master plan -- this Commission supported that master plan, that we'd be here today looking at a development that embraces the Underline and is helping to build it. I mean, I never thought we'd be at this moment at such a fast pace. We are truly excited that NP International, the developers at Gables Station, have embraced the Underline project and have taken the responsibility and leadership to create and build the Underline next to their development. As you can see from our design advisory report, they got an A+ 100, as my mom used to say. NP International has collaborated with our team in the early design phase and made all the changes we requested. This partnership should be the model for other developers along the corridor to not just connect to the Underline, but to jump in and be part of this public-private community that's making this project a reality. Also, we love seeing the Underline as part of a larger fabric where people can live, work and play without a car. Simply put, this plan turns a parking lot into a park and turns a space into a place. So, the residents of this new facility will have new recreational opportunities in their future backyard. Plus, visitors can visit by walking, biking or taking transit and not driving, a future sustainable vision for our city. And with the developer taking the lead, one of the first Underline implementations could be in the City of Coral Gables, setting the bar high and challenging other municipalities to follow your leadership. We strongly support this application and hope you will too. Thank you for your continued support of the Underline and our City.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you, Meg.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, Meg.

Leona Cooper Baker: Good evening.

Mayor Cason: Almost.

Ms. Cooper Baker: My name is Leona Cooper Baker. You surprised me. I stand before you today to say that I support the project that is being talked about. And one reason is because they have thought enough of us to meet with us on special occasions at our homeowners' meeting, and I don't know whether we could say that we've had a lot of that to happen to us in the past. This is my sister-in-law, the other Leona. I'm excited, especially because they're going to include a lot of the history that we have with us. And of course, when I heard that, I got, you know, real busy trying to bring out stuff that I've been doing. And as Mr. Hernandez said, he talked about Arva Moore Parks and what she has done, but I consider myself a very important part of the project because I knew a lot of those people who she has written about; George Allen -- because, you see, I'm almost 80 years old, so I have lived a long time. So, I strongly support the project that they have given you all the plans about, and I'm excited. I've begun working with them. I've given them a lot of information. And I hope you will remember me because I came up here and stood and talked. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to talk.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: And the Leona H. Cooper. Leona H. Cooper, do you want to...

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Mayor Cason: Okay. Let's -- Linda Dixie.

Commissioner Keon: The alpha and the omega.

Linda Dixie: Good afternoon, and thank you.

Mayor Cason: Good afternoon.

Ms. Dixie: I'm Linda Dixie. My address is 142 Florida Avenue. I am a resident and a member of the Lola B. Walker Homeowner's Association and the LBW Foundation. I also support this project. It will be a very welcome business to our community. It will provide a hotel and a residential component, as well as other retail centers that will provide additional career opportunities for our residents. So, I encourage you to vote for this project.

Mayor Cason: thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Edwina Prime.

Edwina Prime: Edwina Prime, 1401 Florida Avenue. Mayor, Commissioners, and staff. Many of our residents are not able to attend today because they're working. And as president of the Lola B. Walker Homeowners' Association, I am representing them. At least 46 letters of support were presented during the Planning and Zoning Board. The height of the hotel and its proximity to the Metrorail is not a problem for us. Our main concern is good-paying jobs for the community and the integration of the historical component of the project in our area. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Mark Trowbridge.

Mark Trowbridge: Well, good afternoon, Mr. Mayor, Mr. Vice Mayor, members of the Commission, Madam Manager, Mr. City Attorney, Mr. Clerk. I'm Mark Trowbridge. I'm the president of our Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce. We're located at 224 Catalonia Avenue, here in the City Beautiful. We rise in support today of this great project. And I just wanted to point out a couple of things that I think are of great interest to our membership and to our leadership. I think, first and foremost, a new hotel product is something that we're very excited about. I think new residents who will be living and shopping and doing business in our city excites us. But I'll pick up on something that Meg Daly mentioned. And that is that we have the opportunity through this project to see one of the first significant segments of the Underline built out. And while right now there's a lot of energy around other neighborhoods where this is happening, this is our chance to see a significant slice of that project come to quick fruition. And think about it in terms of its adjacent nature to what will be happening just north of us in the City of Miami at 37th Avenue. And so, I think we all look at projects like this along the Underline as being incubatable, business development that is of the right size and of the right ilk. The transit-oriented nature of this development cannot also be underplayed. And wouldn't it be great, as you're driving through, you know, part of South Florida and arriving at Coral Gables, to know that you have arrived, that you see a project that represents our architecture and lush green space and reminds you that not only have you arrived in Coral Gables, but you have arrived in the City Beautiful. Thank you very much.

Mayor Cason: Thank you, Mark.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, Mark.

Mayor Cason: A number of people who are in favor of the project, but did not want to speak were Patrick O'Connell, John Allen, Martha de la Peña Rojas, Wayne Eldred, Bruce Bounds, and Christina Pappas. Next, we have Dr. Bradley Richter.

Bradley Richter: Hi. I'm Dr. Bradley Richter. I'm the owner of Coral Gables Animal Hospital, at 4569 Ponce. I want to say that I have a very special interest in this section of Ponce de Leon Boulevard. I grew up in Miami. My family's been here a long time. I got my driver's license at the driver's license bureau. My family bought all their cars from Deel Ford, including a 1956 T-Bird. I went to Gables High. And when Dr. Brown passed away and was ill, I moved back from California because there was an opportunity for me to come back to my hometown and practice where I wanted to be. I am in favor of this project. I want to say thank you to Mr. Reynolds, Mario Garcia-Serra, George Hernandez. I think they've done a great job reaching out to the people, the businesses in the area. My main concern has always been the traffic and the parking. The traffic, I think, has been addressed. They've moved that signalized intersection that was previously planned and moved it down, taking away the signal. I think that solved a big program. The parking, I think, has been addressed fairly well, but I think there's a lot that is going on in that area that still needs to be thought about and maybe addressed not by the developers, but maybe by the City to allow the businesses in that area to not only conduct business, but to also plan for what the future's going to hold. I have an animal hospital. There's another animal hospital. This is the only area that we can have animal hospitals now. That's the only industrialized area that's left. Animal hospitals have special needs, just like human hospitals, for parking, just like mothers with children, just like handicapped people. My business relies on people being able to park and get their animals out safely and get into the hospital at a reasonable distance. The street parking there, I would ask -- I thought about some solutions, but I think if the City would welcome some kind of a task force or somebody to be in charge where I could meet with the developers and talk about it, but we have a school there. We have two animal hospitals. And then we have businesses that are kind of now landlocked between the park, the project, and the projects behind. That is the only parking -- the street parking is the only parking that is now available. I would ask that we ask the school to drop off and pick up in

the back alley, like they were supposed to. I would ask that we have maybe 30-minute parking on the south side of Ponce to let people come in and out on the north side of Ponce, maybe an hour, and we also -- I think the developer has allowed for employee parking -- substantial employee parking to be into their building to equal what we have now because there is no more employee parking spaces available from the City and there hasn't been for a long time. And that area is going to now develop, and there's going to be a bigger need for more employee parking. The parking lot that is now -- I will end soon -- the parking that is available now, remember, we have the Underline coming, and people are going to want to come to this park. They're going to want to come with their bicycles. They're going to want to park their cars. They're going to want to stay for three or four hours and use that Underline. They're going to want to stay in that park. I just hope that there is enough parking available for people to do that without taking up public spaces for the businesses that are in that area.

Mayor Cason: Alright.

Mr. Richter: Thank you very much.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Mr. Richter, a quick question. If I recall the last time we met -- I remember we met, you and I, in my office prior to when Mr. Berkowitz came forward with his project. We talked about the parking. And I think with the way we had left it at the end was there were going to be two temporary -- or short-term parking meters in front of your business. Is that correct?

Mr. Richter: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, there were like 15-minute meters or 10-minute meters, something like that, right?

Mr. Richter: There was 30-minute meters, but they were going to do...

Commissioner Keon: Thirty.

Mr. Richter: Two -- one with a potential for a second one for each of the animal hospitals, if needed. It wasn't totally defined out, but yes, there was a special situation for when Mr. Berkowitz was going to...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Ms. City Manager, what do we do now -- because I'm thinking La Salle Cleaners. I'm thinking some of the dry cleaners in town, we've got alike a 12-minute meter...

Mayor Cason: Fifteen minutes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Twelve or fifteen or ten. I forget exactly what it is.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, we worked with the tenant in front of the store, but Kevin Kinney is here. He can tell you when it's appropriate to put 30-minute meters, those redhead meters, when it's appropriate to put shorter time. So, would you like him to come up?

Vice Mayor Quesada: And if I recall it correctly, you're -- Mr. Richter, your biggest concern was the drop-off and the pickup.

Mr. Richter: Well, people being able to park and get their animals out of the car and get them into the hospital. We try to get people to come in, see them, and if it's an extended stay, we try to let them go so they can go. We try not to tie up the parking there.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Of course.

Mr. Richter: And we try to make it convenient for people.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, you have -- they pull up right in front. They take their, let's say, dog or their cat inside.

Mr. Richter: Correct.

Vice Mayor Quesada: They drop it off and then they can go find -- once you guys already have received the animal, they can find a permanent location to park.

Mr. Richter: That's correct.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Got it.

Mayor Cason: Great, thank you.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Is this an appropriate situation to have that or no?

Parking Director Kinney: No, absolutely. We usually look at businesses like banks, dry cleaners, urgent care centers, places where it's usually a quick pick up and drop off. At this location, one of the issues that kind of makes it harder is the daycare that's right next door. Typically, Dr. Richter's patrons are bringing their animals in at the same time people are dropping off their kids. And so that area gets really congested at that time in the morning. And even having the 30-minute meters, well, somebody taking their child into the school, they can meet the requirements of a 12- or a 30-minute meter because they're not going to be in there that long. So, it is a difficult situation at this location. But absolutely, we would look at limiting the amount of time people could be in those on-street spaces to help out the two animal hospitals.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And Vice Mayor, I also took note on the comment that Dr. Richter made about the school that should have had a drop off in the back and they're not doing that. We'll look into that and we'll...

Mr. Richter: Please.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Work with you on accommodating that.

Mr. Richter: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Okay, thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you. We only have two more cards, Nicolas Cabrera and then Leona H. Cooper.

Nicolas Cabrera: Good afternoon, members of the City Commission. For the record, my name is Nicolas Cabrera, and I reside at 1410 Cantoria Avenue. I'm here today on behalf of my father, former Coral Gables City Commissioner, Ralph Cabrera. My father wrote to four of you expressing his thoughts and feedback regarding the item before you today and asked me to read his message, so it can be included in the public records. If I may, I will now read his public input. Dear City Commission members, as a 50-year resident, a 17-year business owner, and a three-term City Commissioner, I wish to express my serious concerns regarding this commercial application. To be specific, I am most concerned with the applicant's height request. I guess, I could also share my strong opposition to the intensity and density this project would bring to an already challenged corridor. Instead, I will focus on what I consider to be the classic move of a commercial developer purchasing land at an excessive price, and then, attempting to maximize his profit margins at the expense of the City's Zoning Code. In other words, this is just one of those development for the sake of development applications. The good news is, historically, the City has been fortunate to have many excellent developers work hand in hand with our local

government to build quality and well-planned projects. As all of you know, the examples are too numerous to mention. Personally, I believe the Zoning Code text amendment item before you will be easy to vote on. For starters, you have staff's recommendation to limit the height of the project to a maximum of 120 feet. In addition, the Planning Board supported this recommendation unanimously, 4-0. My greatest concern of a favorable vote to this height increase lies in, once again, setting a serious precedent. I know the City Attorney will opine that no individual application can set a precedence. As usual, he will be legally correct. However, the bottom line is others will use this decision to support their potential height limit increases. Govern well. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: It's nice to see you.

Mayor Cason: Leona H. Cooper.

Commissioner Keon: Congratulations. You just graduated from high school. You're off to college in the fall?

Mr. Cabrera: Yes, thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Congratulations.

Commissioner Lago: Congratulations.

Leona H. Cooper: So, you leave the best for last.

Mayor Cason: You don't have to come up here. Why don't you stay right there.

Ms. Cooper: I'm going to stand right here.

Mayor Cason: Stay where you are.

Ms. Cooper: And you've left the best for last. I appreciate it. To the City -- to the Manager, to the Commissioners, to my favorite Clerk and the Attorney, I want to tell you that I'm happy to be here. I will celebrate my 84th birthday on June 30. I've lived in the City of Coral Gables since I was -- I don't know how old, but in the vicinity since I was 15 years old. First time anyone has ever come through here and taken so much interest in what will make us happy. You have never lived in an area where people could come in and build anything they want, which was not from our community they would come in, and they were allowed to do it by the people that sat at that dais, okay. They took three of our parks, which is now the William A. Cooper Park, the Nellie B. Moore Park, and what's the other one -- Lola B. Walker Park. They all had, with the permission of the City Commissioners, to build rental houses, which was stacked like I don't know what, just name it. And they didn't have indoor bathrooms, okay, and you had to have the people come along with a truck to empty the sewers or whatever you call them every week and you had to smell that while you're having a basketball game on the park from the school. So, now, here we are. We have these people that have come in and they're going to give us this elaborate thing that we're getting to participate in and show you how we want it to look. We are happy with it, and we don't want any objection from any of you to let it happen. So, I'm here representing my husband, who was born in 1929 at 200 Washington Drive, and he died -- he was born at 201 Washington Drive and he died at 200 Washington Drive. He graduated from George Washington Carver Junior-Senior High School. That's what that little building in the front used to be. So, therefore, I think I have the right to tell you, that I expect you to agree with everything that's been presented because we have given him our approval of everything they've presented.

And so, you're going to miss out on a big opportunity if you don't let this go through. And I will tell everybody, New York Times, Chicago whatever, that you all have not been fair to us, so you don't want that, do you? So, with that, I'm through.

Mayor Cason: Thank you very much. Alright, that will then close the public hearing on these four items, E-10- E-13. And do we have any discussion? Any more questions from the Commission?

Mr. Bass: Mr. Mayor, if I just...

Mayor Cason: You want to have your rebuttal -- your closing...

Mr. Bass: It's going to take almost no time. I just want to simply say there are some conditions in your staff recommendations of conditions, that we're going to need to iron out between First and Second Reading. I don't think we should take the time to do that here. I'm optimistic that we can. We ask for your approval.

Mayor Cason: I wanted to just ask on the conditions of approval in general, most of those you agree with? You don't have a problem?

Mr. Bass: Most of them, we agree with. There are a few with which we don't agree and we could talk about them now or we could talk about them later...

Mayor Cason: And we'll have a chance at the second reading if we pass this to...

Mr. Bass: Yeah, I think the time would be...

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mr. Bass: Better spent between first and second.

Commissioner Keon: I think there are some conditions that we really should either agree to or dispense with now. There's a couple that I would like to either agree with or we dispense with. But before we -- well, go ahead and finish, and then I have another couple questions.

Mr. Bass: I'll just highlight them for you, and then we can take it however you would like. There's a condition with respect to a \$2.4 million contribution for the trolley. We can't agree to that, and I would dare suggest it's a bit punitive to make that type of ask as a condition of a zoning approval. On a -- just on a timing standpoint, there's some conditions that tie our building permits to the completion of the Underline improvements. We're committed to the Underline improvements. We just don't know when we could start on those because it's not our land. So, if we could talk about the structure of those statements and make sure that our building permits and our certificates of occupancy aren't held up if the Underline project is delayed in some way, I'd like to delink those if we can, the mechanics of which we can work on between now and Second Reading.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Commissioner Keon: Well, I had a question about the...

Mr. Bass: And obviously, the height condition we don't agree with.

Commissioner Keon: I have a question about the structure itself. All of the loading, unloading, all of that is internal to the project, yes? So, you're not -- even though your trucks can come in and on your road that's, you know, between the Underline and the project, that's really only an access road. It's not -- they won't be parked there to deliver or anything else. Everything is taken care of internally and under the project?

Mr. Hernandez: That's correct.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Mr. Hernandez: It'll be a very pretty access road.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Mr. Hernandez: But it'll take care of all that internally.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, but everything is done internally...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes, that's correct.

Commissioner Keon: To the project. Okay, thank you.

Commissioner Lago: I have a...

Mayor Cason: Go ahead, continue.

Commissioner Lago: Mayor, if I may. I have a question for Mr. Bass, if you'll be a gentleman and just please come up. In reference to the quarter mile of the Underline, I think it's a spectacular idea. Obviously, it will give us a leg up on -- basically, most of South Florida, especially, has hope for the Underline gets built. I have my reservations in regards to whether all of it's going to get built, God willing it is, but I have some serious reservations. When will you be building the Underline if this project is approved? Will you be doing it before you commence construction on the buildings, or is it in sync with the entire project?

Mr. Bass: Our goal -- I'll have my client correct me if I'm wrong -- will be to do it in sync with. However, we don't control when we're going to get permission to start working in the public areas. But our goal would be to do it in sync with. We would save mobilization costs. You know, we'd have people out there. We'd be doing the site prep work all at the same time.

Commissioner Lago: And let me tell you why I ask you.

Mr. Bass: May I just make sure that...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, that's fine. And there's a reason...

Mr. Bass: That's correct.

Commissioner Lago: First off, I ask because, number one, the entire scope of the Underline project has not been fully defined yet, and I imagine there's extensive public input that has to come into play here, number one. So, really don't know what the actual -- I guess maybe Geomantics can discuss, because they obviously have a background in regards to landscaping, but we don't know exactly what's the entire scope of the Underline. But also, you know, the City has been in this situation before with Old Spanish Village, where a lot was promised. Again, obviously, the market turned, the development went under, and we had a project that was stalled for ten years and the residents basically had to live in torture for ten years. So, you know, I want to -- every time I look at one of these projects, which by the way, I think we've had what like two projects this year come before us. We haven't had that many projects come before us. I always get worried, you know, for the business owners, for the residents who live adjacent to this. You know, I want to make sure that at least the public improvements take, you know, a front seat, not a back seat to the project.

Mr. Bass: So -- and if I may on that, there was a condition I think needs a little more meat on its bones. We're agreeing to fund, but yeah, we don't yet know the full scope of those

improvements. And so, obviously, we need to use a rule of reason with respect to what those improvements will be and how soon we can start to work on that.

Commissioner Lago: My second question is in regards to Art in Public Places. Have you defined a strategy in regards to Art in Public Places? Will you be paying into the fund, or will that be -- is there a defined strategy in regards to Art in Public Places?

Mr. Bass: I'm told we want to -- I didn't have an answer to that question.

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Mr. Bass: I'm told we want to provide the art in public places rather than pay into the fund.

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Mr. Bass: And then if I may on the trolley, just to clarify. We're okay buying a trolley. Where it becomes a bit difficult is this extended maintenance funding obligation over 20 years.

Commissioner Lago: Well, there's a significant difference, you know, between buying one trolley and, you know, 2.4 million.

City Attorney Leen: Well, if I may...

Mr. Bass: It's a big difference.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah. I think that's something that we need to iron out as a Commission.

Mr. Bass: Yes. We would hope that you would...

City Attorney Leen: If it's okay...

Commissioner Slesnick: Yeah, I want to speak to that.

Mayor Cason: Mr. Attorney.

City Attorney Leen: Before to speak to it, if it's okay, Mr. Mayor, what exactly are you proffering? Like what would you proffer to the Commission?

Mr. Bass: To pay for the cost of purchasing one trolley.

City Attorney Leen: And with the other conditions, are you proffering them all other than the ones that you mentioned that you objected to?

Commissioner Lago: No, they're objecting...

City Attorney Leen: Obviously, not the 120 feet, you said.

Mr. Bass: I'm not proffering. We're accepting the conditions, except for those that I've identified, and we are not accepting the condition of lowering the height to 120 feet. In response to the demand for \$2.4 million, we are not accepting. We are proffering to pay for the...

City Attorney Leen: Understood.

Mr. Bass: Acquisition of the trolley.

City Attorney Leen: So that would be a proffer.

Mr. Bass: And we are proffering to fund the Underline improvements within the segments we identified, within the reasonable scope when that scope is determined. And we're proffering to commence that construction at the same time...

Mayor Cason: Will that have a monetary value? So, you don't know what it's going to be yet, so you will pay up to whatever you can under a monetary value?

Mr. Bass: I believe that our commitment in terms of scope for not just the Underline, but the adjacent park -- conversion of the parking lots..;

Mayor Cason: Right.

Mr. Bass: Will be three million dollars.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Commissioner Slesnick: Mr. Bass, while you're going through that, for the viewing public, could you just sort of highlight the public benefits that you're suggesting that you offer for doing this project for all the things that you're asking for?

Mr. Bass: Sure.

Commissioner Slesnick: I mean, if you wouldn't mind because people aren't reading all these reports and pages and so forth.

Mr. Bass: Okay. I'd be happy to do my very best. I would say that if the viewing public is watching this recorded on their DVR, if they roll back to your wonderful staff's presentation, there's a slide in the PowerPoint, also available on your wonderful Clerk's website, that catalogs all of these benefits.

Commissioner Slesnick: I just want you to say...

Mr. Bass: So, let me just highlight a few. We are proposing to have 47 percent of our ground floor open and publicly accessible. The Code requires only 20. We are proposing to transform...

Vice Mayor Quesada: And that includes -- I'm sorry. I think Mr. Trias said it earlier. That includes areas, I guess, under covers, any area the public can walk through.

Mr. Bass: Correct, arcaded areas...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Whether it has grass or arcade or...

Mr. Bass: Arcaded areas are all rolled into that 47...

Commissioner Slesnick: And does that include the pool top areas and so forth too?

Mr. Bass: That's just the ground...

Commissioner Slesnick: The ground level.

Mr. Bass: Level, grade level.

Commissioner Lago: May I interject one second, Commissioner, because I'm going right -- just I just want to interject in reference to that. Do you see any other areas on the ground floor that currently have pavers that maybe we can make it, you know, a little bit more green?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Artificial turf?

Commissioner Lago: No, not artificial turf. I mean, have you considered that or maybe you're entertaining that, or is there anything else, any other type of design feature, Mr. Hernandez?

Mr. Bass: If I may confer with Mr. Hernandez on that...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, that's what I'm asking.

Mr. Bass: For a second, but could I...

Vice Mayor Quesada: As you confer, I'd like to ask Ramon Trias a question.

Commissioner Lago: Because that goes into -- because that goes -- excuse me, Mr. Vice Mayor, that goes into my point, what I was making earlier this morning, which was, again, the Code requires 20 percent open space. You're talking about 47 percent open space. Now, the Commission supported me in the discussion item which was let's really get into the finer details of what is open space. Open space to me for a long time -- and I meant no disrespect to developers -- but we're going to turn this -- we're going to flip this around.

Commissioner Keon: He's not wearing heels.

Commissioner Lago: We're going to make this green. We're going to have permeable pavers, as my dear friend, Commissioner Keon wears heels. I don't wear heels -- at least in public I don't. You know, so I think that we need to make sure that we make this as green as possible because you cannot be the City Beautiful and harp the fact that you're a 30-year Tree City, USA if we just have pavement and asphalt.

Mr. Hernandez: We are working on, as you said, the fine details, and we will detail it as finely as we can and give you a lot of green space, a lot of permeable hard space and it will be an inspiring public realm.

Commissioner Lago: Because I'm asking you -- just when you see -- I know you need pavers...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: But try to make them permeable pavers.

Mr. Hernandez: Right.

Commissioner Lago: Try to make them so -- I know you need areas where people can sit and congregate. I'm excited about that if we do approve this project today, or with conditions, as we haven't discussed those yet. But I want to make sure that we take advantage -- for example, the area of the plaza which is on Grand Avenue, you have a sliver of grass. In my opinion, it shouldn't be just a sliver of grass. That piece should go from -- you know, it should be more prominent than that section of green space which is right off Grand Avenue. It should be pretty significant. It should be probably about two or three times larger than what it is.

Mr. Hernandez: I'm trying to find what you're pointing at, I'm sorry.

Commissioner Lago: On page 21.

Mr. Hernandez: Yes, yes.

Commissioner Lago: For example, you have all this area which could be permeable pavers, which could be pavers. What I would love to see is I would love to see a big piece, you know, of this, which again, you know, could really significantly -- or is that the second floor...

Mr. Hernandez: No, no. That's ground floor.

Commissioner Lago: That's ground floor.

Mr. Hernandez: When we said 47, we mean 47 on the earth.

Commissioner Lago: Real, true.

Mr. Hernandez: On the earth.

Commissioner Lago: Which in most projects is not the real number.

Mr. Hernandez: Mostly it's 20, so this is nearly two and a half -- well, more than two and-a-half times. But the area you were pointing at, we are in fact looking at right now, particularly because on the triangular point of the garage, which sits just south of our project across Grand Avenue, there's a beautiful stand of very mature trees. So, we are going to be working at creating a kind of archway. We're going to be planting equally sized mature trees to work with the existing stand to create a verdant gateway through Grand into the project. So, believe me, we are working on this with great enthusiasm.

Mayor Cason: So, you'll give us more details if...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Mayor Cason: We get to the Second Reading. And remember the ladies in high heels.

Commissioner Keon: That's right.

Mr. Hernandez: That's right.

Commissioner Keon: You need a...

Commissioner Lago: You know, and again, just my last statement. Just remember about SRI values, you know. It's huge. You know, when you get under that canopy, the temperature drops. You know, you get away from that solar reflective index and it's brutal. It's brutal out there. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Alright, let's move to questions that the Vice Mayor may have.

Commissioner Slesnick: He hasn't finished mine.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Oh, I'm sorry. Yeah, go ahead.

Mayor Cason: Oh, that's right. You're going to...

Commissioner Keon: He has public benefits.

Mayor Cason: Read down through the whole list or can we get back...

Commissioner Slesnick: Just some of the highlights.

Mr. Bass: I'm going to highlight them. And I just would, to complete that thought, is we've done the calculations. We'll reconfirm. We talked about if you look at our building footprint and our open space within the context of the greater assembly of the parks, we talked about we would have 70 percent open space. Forty-seven percent of that seventy percent is permeable, green, open.

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Mr. Bass: But we'll drill down on that a little further...

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Mr. Bass: For second reading. We just did that on the fly.

Commissioner Lago: That's good. Thank you.

Mr. Bass: With respect to answering Commissioner Slesnick's questions, we are providing approximately two acres of publicly-accessible open space at the ground, as we just mentioned, 47 percent. We are funding the design and construction of approximately four acres of newly-created park space. We are contributing, as I mentioned before, one trolley by way of proffered purchase. We are contributing to mobility improvements along US-1, including additional crosswalks subject to the FDOT approvals for those. We are improving the public parking options in this area, including parallel parking and potential public parking within the garage, to accommodate the employees of the existing uses. We are improving the landscape and pedestrian experience along US 1 by creating the vastly improved sidewalk sections that you saw Mr. Hernandez present. We have an integrated plan for bicycle sharing and car sharing and electric car charging stations. And we have a significant gesture toward covered -- the covered, shaded pedestrian experience all internal to our project. And we're paying for all of that without asking for one additional square foot of development right.

Commissioner Lago: And the project is -- excuse me -- LEED, correct?

Mr. Bass: And I'm sorry, I missed that one. LEED Silver or equivalent green building certification, in terms of a highlight of our benefits.

Mayor Cason: Vice Mayor, questions?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah. And I just -- I missed this. I mean, I did -- I've seen it, but I heard it a little bit differently during the presentation by the applicant. The closest unit to the rail, you -
- I'm sorry. I was writing it down. I missed it.

Mayor Cason: Thirty-four feet.

Mr. Hernandez: If I may, let me pull up the board.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, if you can, please. I was going to ask you to pull that up again.

Commissioner Slesnick: I have a question on that too so...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Okay, perfect.

Mr. Hernandez: So, that diagram...

Vice Mayor Quesada: If I recall correctly...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And I probably shouldn't do it this way, but I'm going to do it this way.

Mr. Hernandez: Sure.

Vice Mayor Quesada: The height of the Metrorail, including one of the vehicles, one of the trams, whatever you call it...

Mr. Hernandez: Cars or buses.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Cars, one of the cars, is 34 feet off the ground?

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And then the lowest point of a unit in the buildings is what?

Mr. Hernandez: That -- I don't know if you can see that, but the diagonal measurement from the...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Sixty-six feet is that?

Mr. Hernandez: Sixty-six feet to the parapet of the roof terrace of the unit.

Commissioner Slesnick: Of the two residential units, not of the hotel?

Mr. Hernandez: That's correct. Of the two -- this is for the residential units because those are long-term residents that stay, you know, years or what have you.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And I'm a little confused because of the document I got today from Ramon Trias. It says -- so, is there no more hotel?

Mr. Hernandez: There is a extended-stay hotel with fewer keys, 66 keys.

Vice Mayor Quesada: But what we got from Ramon Trias today says number of hotel rooms, zero. Applicant updated plans. Obviously, I'm misreading this.

Mayor Cason: Under extended stay, it says 66.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, sir. Just to...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Oh, I'm sorry, okay.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Vice Mayor, to clarify. That has to do with the density calculations, the no hotel room concept...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Now, I got it. I'm clear now. I'm clear now. It's just that that line was bolded and I didn't see the line below it. Okay, my fault. And so those extended-stay units, where are they going to be located? Are they going to be located in that same building?

Mr. Hernandez: No. This outline is for the middle building and the northern most building. Those are the two buildings that have rental apartments. The hotel building, or the southern building, there is commercial, same height of the commercial in that outline, okay. Then there is a roof terrace where the pool is. So, because the hotel has no -- the southern building has no parking structure in it, the pool level is at the ceiling of the commercial, okay. The kitchen for the restaurant that serves the pool level is on the Metrorail side.

Vice Mayor Quesada: On the Metrorail side.

Mr. Hernandez: So, the adjacency of what -- of the passing train or the passing car, right, is the back of house, laundry, kitchen, etcetera, etcetera.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, I was grabbing a passport yesterday...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: At the passport facility.

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And I was surprised when one of the Metrorail trams came through, the noise...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Of it.

Mayor Cason: Are you leaving the country?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Huh?

Mayor Cason: I'm just kidding.

Vice Mayor Quesada: That would be a visa.

Commissioner Lago: Take your heels. Take his heels.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, in that regard, you know, I was surprised at the noise, I really was. Because I had never been in that area when there was an actual Metrorail coming through.

Mr. Hernandez: Right.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Typically, I'm driving by or I'm getting on the Metrorail, and you don't really realize it. But I was actually in the building and I could hear it. I don't want to say you could feel it, but it was much louder than I expected.

Mr. Hernandez: Right.

Vice Mayor Quesada: What are the thoughts -- what's that impact going to be on those units, on the residential units? The last thing I want -- I think the last thing we all want -- and I think everyone's on the same page here is that the residential units are empty, no one wants to live there because of the noise of it. Have you guys taken a look at that?

Mr. Hernandez: We have. Just a couple of simple principles...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Because it's a little bit different with Mr. Berkowitz's part of the project. If it's a retail project, it's a little bit different. You're walking through. You're looking to buy, you know, some golf clubs or something or -- well, it's a little bit different when it's a retail project than when somebody's actually going to be living there.

Commissioner Slesnick: Not from Sports Authority.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I know, yeah.

Mr. Hernandez: So -- but to continue, if I may, along your line of question. So, in that building, the south building, which is the one that has the extended-stay hotel, the second level, the level above the commercial, the ground floor commercial, has the restaurant, the decks, the pool decks. The pool decks and such face US-1. All of the back of house that supports those restaurants and the pool deck and such are banked against the rail.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Will be -- I understand that.

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Will be the most severely affected.

Mr. Hernandez: Right. Then the next couple of levels up, two levels up vertically are the extended-stay hotel rooms. Why? Because those are relatively short, okay. The units begin above that. I'm only describing the south building. The units begin above that.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, the extended-stay hotel rooms are some -- if I'm looking at this diagram, are somewhere in that gray shaded area.

Mr. Hernandez: That's correct. That's correct.

Mayor Cason: I assume you're going to do everything you can for insulation...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes. And that's the third thing. The best protection against sound is distance. And horizontal distance is actually better than vertical distance. But as I said, we're only 34 feet -- the north -- the western wall of our building is only 34 feet away from that closest point of the track, which is 75 percent of the back wall of the Commission chamber, okay. The best separation is horizontal. We don't have that luxury. The next best separation is vertical. That's why we're asking for the ask. And of course, we can do things at the section of the wall, sound attenuation, hurricane impact windows. All of these things will help. But the best protection is distance and we can only do vertical distance.

Mayor Cason: So, I would assume it's to your benefit to make sure that whoever -- you're going to rent those places, so you're going to do everything possible to make sure the noise levels don't drive people away, or they don't rent.

Mr. Hernandez: That's correct, Mayor. Have I answered your question, Commissioner?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes, you have. But I had a follow-up question to that. So, if we -- okay, because it's a unique situation. From my five years sitting up here, you know, we've seen

different types of projects. And typically, when someone asks for additional height, it's a direct correlation with additional FAR.

Mr. Hernandez: That is correct.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Which is -- well, I'm just telling you from my experience. So, from what I've seen, it's typically what you see. They want height because they want additional FAR because they want to make more money on the project and then they want to squeeze everything in as possible. So, there's a difference here because you're asking for height but not additional FAR.

Mr. Hernandez: That is correct.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Which is inconsistent with my previous experience.

Commissioner Lago: Which, Vice Mayor, if I may, it actually costs you more money to go higher.

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: So, you're not making more money and it's actually costing you more money.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, if this project were to be at 120 feet, okay, because I haven't heard anyone address it from this perspective -- and I have heard some objectives prior to coming today about the height, and that's obviously been a central focus. For me, I'm assuming the others have heard it as well. I don't think I'm the only one that people have spoken to about it. If this project was 120 feet -- I guess I want to hear it from you -- would additional residential units have to be, you know, lower than that 90 -- that 101-foot mark?

Mr. Hernandez: That's absolutely correct. If this project were...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Because it would still be the same number of units.

Mr. Hernandez: That is correct. If this project were built at 120 feet, there's only two ways to accomplish that. One, spread out the parking longer on the site. What does that do?

Vice Mayor Quesada: It would remove the open space area.

Mr. Hernandez: It removes the 47 percent of open space of the earth for public use. So, spreading the parking longer across the length of the site, yes, does reduce the height of the total project, but we lose what you were discussing before we presented. We lose what you really perceive, the quality and the experience of the earth, number one. The second thing it does is it brings the floor of the first unit that much closer to the rail. That's the reason for the...

Commissioner Slesnick: Mr. Hernandez.

Mayor Cason: That's the tradeoff.

Commissioner Slesnick: But Mr. Hernandez...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: And I'm not in favor of the 160 feet height. You had mentioned...

Vice Mayor Quesada: A hundred and sixty.

Commissioner Slesnick: A hundred and sixty.

City Commission Meeting

June 14, 2016

Agenda Items E-10-E-14 are related – Ordinances of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida Requesting an amendment to the Future Land Use Map, the Zoning Map, text amendments, and requesting review of a Planning Area Development for the proposed project referred to as "Gables Station".

Vice Mayor Quesada: Oh, it sounded like you said 1,660.

Commissioner Slesnick: Well, 16 floors.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, I got you.

Commissioner Slesnick: I mean, if you didn't have all the high ceilings downstairs. For the 160 foot height, you have expressed that as being in the hotel complex.

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: Because you want distance between the Metrorail and the hotel rooms. But I understand there's only -- now you're going to have three floors of extended stay, and looking on your charts, it's three, four, and five floors -- a third, fourth and fifth floor, that is still right next to the Metrorail. So, why are you asking for more height here when it's going to be residential units?

Mr. Hernandez: Yeah. There's two parts to the answer. I hope I get both of them. If not, stop me. One is the second floor. It's three, four, five...

Commissioner Slesnick: No. I saw the first and second. The second one's the restaurant.

Mr. Hernandez: Second floor is back of house of restaurant. So, then three, four, five of the extended-stay hotel is parallel more or less to the gray zone because those ceiling heights are higher than parking ceilings.

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes. Okay, but again, you're right -- you're really closely to the Metrorail, because the Metrorail on that particular building bends in even closer to the...

Mr. Hernandez: The 34 feet that I mentioned is the closest point. So, in the entire project, the closest point is the 34. And you know, if you give us 70 feet, we'll take it, but...

Commissioner Slesnick: No.

Mr. Hernandez: We thought that we would come in with the most reasonable ask given there's no additional FAR to create a kind of quality of life experience on the ground and up above where people are inhabiting the project, primarily the long-term residents of the project. So, the easiest compromise was to put the hotel rooms above that second commercial level, which is the pool deck level of the hotel...

Commissioner Slesnick: And I...

Mr. Hernandez: And then the residential above that.

Commissioner Slesnick: And I hear that, but you still want 160 feet...

Mr. Hernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: Instead of what staff recommends at 121.

Mr. Hernandez: We cannot do the project at 160 for the line of -- for the answers that I gave earlier. It makes -- I think it makes an inferior project. And you've heard testimony from the adjoining neighborhood. The open space is the key of this project from the point of view of the Metro line, from the point of view of public realm improvements, from the point of view of the openness of the project to the neighborhood immediately to the east. And we cannot satisfy that requirement of that neighborhood, the 47 percent, if we just make a landscaper. We can make a

landscaper. You know, there's skyscrapers; there's also landscapers. And just fill the earth and bring...

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay.

Mr. Hernandez: The bottom down and...

Commissioner Slesnick: Can't we have a compromise between the two, though?

Mr. Hernandez: Let me finish, please. And it will not make a more beautiful city. It will not make a more beautiful project, and it will make a worse experience when you're inside those units.

Commissioner Slesnick: Right now, though -- Mr. Trias, where is the nearest 160-foot building to that location? It's in the...

Mr. Hernandez: Maybe Mr. Trias can answer that.

Commissioner Slesnick: Central Business District, right?

Mayor Cason: You're saying...

Commissioner Slesnick: It's not in the industrial district. The nearest 160-foot building is in the commercial district.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah. The tallest buildings in Coral Gables are 190 feet, 6 inches in the Central Business District. And the closest one would be probably, once it's built, the Mediterranean Village.

Mayor Cason: Mediterranean Village.

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I would think.

Mayor Cason: But you're saying you can't see that from the single-family homes -- you can't see it...

Mr. Hernandez: Yeah.

Mayor Cason: Whether it's 160, 140. I mean, you can't see it.

Mr. Hernandez: That is correct because of the Gables Ponce building. There's one other thing, too...

Commissioner Slesnick: I like your design. I like the pull off from the traffic. I like the open spaces. I like the grass or fake grass or whatever, and the design is fabulous. And I like every -- almost every detail of it, but I am really -- staff recommends 121 feet, and I think that's -- when I look at this chart, like this design right here, looking at that through the Metrorail on the bottom, okay, that doesn't look like a 160-foot building.

Commissioner Keon: That is Mr. Berkowitz's and how high was that?

Commissioner Slesnick: No, no, on the bottom. Down on the bottom.

Commissioner Keon: Oh, I'm sorry.

Commissioner Slesnick: It doesn't look like it's...

Mr. Hernandez: The perspective...

Commissioner Slesnick: In scale.

Mr. Hernandez: On the bottom. Yes, well, the building you're looking at is the middle building, which is not 160 feet. That's the residential building.

Commissioner Keon: A hundred and forty-eight.

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay, but it looks like that's where the circle is for the -- no?

Mr. Hernandez: No, no. That's the square.

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay.

Mr. Hernandez: That's the large square between the southernmost building and the middle building.

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay, we looked up Robb & Stucky to see -- and there are no cars in front of Robb & Stucky because Le Jeune Road goes there -- and that is ten floors, 100 feet.

Mr. Hernandez: Yes. That building is habitable 100 feet.

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay. And then right across, you're asking for an additional 60 feet.

Mr. Hernandez: Let me just show you one thing, if I may.

Commissioner Slesnick: I just think it's too much for US-1. That's...

Mr. Hernandez: So, this is the ground floor condition of the project. Here is the circular element (INAUDIBLE), well ahead, as you see, of our building. But (INAUDIBLE). That hemicycle all the way here -- Okay, so there is a rotunda -- there is a kind of rotunda engaged in the corner of the Robb & Stucky -- of the Gables Ponce building where Robb & Stucky is, and that is well in advance -- in other words, well south or, in other words, well -- closer to Le Jeune, okay, than we are. You can see it very clearly in this diagram. Now, the portion of our building that has -- also has a hemicycle, again, referring to the -- you know, it's going for Mediterranean bonuses. It has to use design elements which are bona fide examples in the City Code. The hemicycle of this building is one such bona fide element, so we are using a hemicycle as well right here, but this hemicycle is only one commercial floor height. So, even though the beige in this drawing extends out, that building starts way back here. At this point, back here, already the existing Gables Ponce building is taller than it is in the area where Robb & Stucky is.

Mayor Cason: Anybody else have questions?

Commissioner Keon: I had -- yeah, I had a few questions, yes.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Commissioner Keon: They -- some of them have to do with two of the conditions, but before I start, I'd like Mr. Trias to come up, please. And I'd like you to address this issue of the recommendation at 120 feet. When I saw that, I had to tell you, I was exceedingly surprised to see a recommendation coming forward from you. You're our director of Planning. Your background is you're an architect.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I'm an architect, yes.

Commissioner Keon: You're an urban planner.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's right.

Commissioner Keon: You have expertise in the field of urban planning.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I do.

Commissioner Keon: And what is your role here in the City, as the Planning director? What do you do for the Commission?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I give you the best advice I can.

Commissioner Keon: You provide us with compelling and substantial reason to help us make the decisions that we make; is that right?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's right.

Commissioner Keon: So, when you came in here -- now, I know that you had been working with this developer for some period of time. I know that we've had multiple conversations about this project because I've asked you about different things on it. From the inception of this project, because of the conditions related to the Metrorail, they have asked for that height. And from the very beginning of the discussion, you have worked with them on -- with a plan at that height. And when I spoke to you, you have always spoken of a project of that height. So, you know -- and my -- in talking to you, the assumption was is that you believed in order to accomplish the quality and the plan, and whatever it was coming forward, this was a project at any -- if there is any place in our City that you would place height, it would be here. If there was any place in our City that would take -- would -- you would want residential and hotel because of the access to the Metrorail, it would be here. And so, for all those reasons, this project is in a good place at a good time in our city, and this project requires that level of height. And when I saw the memo

that was emailed to us on Friday, this past Friday, where there was a recommendation from the Planning staff of 120 feet, I cannot begin to tell you how surprised I was at that because, one, I don't know why you would recommend on feet. I would assume based on everything you had said, you would recommend, or you would base it on the reasons why you might have to go to this, and you would leave the decision on the height to the Commission as the policymaking body for this city. But you, in your professional role, would provide us with the information and the evidence that we would need in order to make that decision. And I think somehow that's gotten twisted. And I think that when you come in, and you recommend a height that is not at all consistent with the conversations that you have had and the work you have done. It is exceedingly confusing to us, to the applicant, and particularly, to the public. So, I'm going to ask you now -- I mean, you know, because maybe, you know, I don't know how things got transmitted or whatever else, you know. Despite what may be in writing, I'm going to ask you, as our professional planner, what is your recommendation to us based on the information provided to us to date.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Commissioner, I -- during my presentation, I think I was very clear that the range of appropriate height for a project this size based on planning and urban design theory was between 1 to 1 and 1.5 to 1, which is 120 to 160 approximately.

Commissioner Keon: One sixty. And I think that recommendation got lost...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: In a very quiet tone and a single sentence in your presentation.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No, and I'll say it....

Commissioner Keon: So, now I would like -- now that -- we are going to rely on you, are going to look to you to make a decision, now I would like it clearly stated.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I will be exceedingly clear.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: What I recommended to the Planning & Zoning Board some time ago was consistent with what the Commission has approved in the area, and that was the thinking behind it. I would not take your role, and provide some recommendations that is inconsistent with your policy. I also said that it's a policy decision. It's up to you. I left that decision to you. I'm here ready to explain any kind of design consequences or design opportunities we have. But both are within the range of reasonable design. The original recommendation that went before the Planning and Zoning Board has not changed, just for clarity. And now we're here and now we're certainly able to have whatever conversation you desire. So, whatever question you have of me in terms of a recommendation, I'm ready to answer.

Commissioner Keon: As -- okay, as our planner, do you find any objection for -- in our city, for the City of Coral Gables, to the height that they are proposing in that place...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No. (INAUDIBLE)...

Commissioner Keon: On that lot at this time?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No. There is no theoretical or urban design objection to that height, absolutely not.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It's an issue of policy.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: And I recall reading the transcript of the Planning and Zoning, and you clearly said there that the only reason you were going for 120 was because that's the seems to have been the...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The Commission's...

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mayor Cason: Height on the -- that we did for Collection Residences.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Correct.

Mayor Cason: But that you were leaving it to the -- that was the policy decision that we had to make.

Commissioner Lago: Mayor, if I may.

Commissioner Keon: Well, the policy -- or the practice in the area is at 120. The height for this particular part that is under consideration, because it is a planned area development, because it is a mixed-use project, and for all those reasons, this site...

Commissioner Lago: And because -- if I may interject, Commissioner Keon -- this is a very special site. This is probably the only site in the entire city that has the exposure to the Metrorail, like the Vice Mayor said. Take a moment, stand below the Metrorail adjacent to the new City building and just -- not enjoy, but you know, really get to the point where you could understand and feel the noise and the rumbling that, you know, just being adjacent to it you have

to basically, you know, deal with. There's no other options. It's there. It's not going away. We're not relocating the Metrorail. But this also goes back to the simple fact of are you going to trade height for quality or are you going to say we're going to make exceptions because we want more open space, because we want better design, because we want a LEED project. Because there's a lot of things -- I just...

Commissioner Keon: Because we want building.

Commissioner Lago: To me, the key here is 60 percent less parking -- less traffic. They're not asking for additional density. They're not asking for additional intensity. I would ask that staff work with the applicant between first and Second Reading, to lower the height of the project, you know, as much as possible without compromising in regards to the issue of noise, you know, slab to slab heights. It can be lowered a little bit, maybe saving, you know, a significant amount of feet. We can discuss the issue of the \$2.4 million for the trolley or we can ask staff to work...

Commissioner Keon: Well, I'm going to -- no, I want to -- I'd like to address that when you're finished. I'd like to...

Commissioner Lago: No, I'm just saying...

Commissioner Keon: Go back and finish that discussion.

Commissioner Lago: And I think have the same concerns you do. I think it's a bad look, in my opinion. You know, I don't even know where to commence. How did we get \$2.4 million? Is it some sort of equation...

Commissioner Keon: I don't know. But I think that -- I think...

Commissioner Lago: Is it ridership?

Commissioner Keon: Okay, we go back...

Commissioner Lago: What are we expecting?

Commissioner Keon: To the height. I'm asking Mr. Trias. He has told us that, you know, as a professional planner that we rely on, he has no objection to the height that is being presented here and he would endorse it, or you're just telling us that it is not objectionable...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It is...

Commissioner Keon: And to do it the way they're doing it, it would require that height.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It's a very appropriate height, and the design benefits from it.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: If the Commission feels comfortable with the height, certainly it's appropriate and it's something that...

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Should be approved.

City Attorney Leen: Well, let me add something here. For purposes of the record and if this is ever to be reviewed, the way I understood the Planning and Zoning director's testimony is he provided you a range, and this is within the range. So, you have some -- you have flexibility.

But the evidence supports -- the evidence that's in the record is substantial and competent and would support this height.

Commissioner Slesnick: But the...

Commissioner Keon: This height, between 120 and 160 feet.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Slesnick: But the range is if we change it from industrial to commercial.

Commissioner Keon: To mixed use.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The range...

Commissioner Slesnick: I mean, mixed use.

Commissioner Keon: And a PAD.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah. The -- correct. The mixed use land use allows you to have a very precise maximum height. It's the only land use that allows that.

Commissioner Slesnick: But right now it's 72 feet or 100 feet -- or almost 100 feet with Mediterranean bonuses. So, we're going from 100 feet with Mediterranean bonuses roughly, what's allowed now, to 160 feet?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It's 100 feet for mixed use projects under the overlay.

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay, but I mean, we have to...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Commissioner Slesnick: Change the zoning to mixed use with the PAD. But right now, if you built the building as right, you'd get Mr. Berkowitz's building.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Or if you do a...

Commissioner Slesnick: Or something like that.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's a commercial project, and if you do a mixed use project, you can have 100 feet of height, so it could be a little bit taller than the project that was approved before.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, but you could also build a project that's lot line to lot line.

Mayor Cason: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: And you have 20 percent open space, which consists of pavers and asphalt and we get back to...

Mayor Cason: So, it's clear...

Commissioner Lago: Again, it's within the Code. It's within what's allowable, but is it really a representation of what the City of Coral Gables is all about? That's why I emphatically wanted to -- I'm glad that the Mayor asked me if we would discuss F-3 before this because it just makes so much sense. And you're going to get another project, which we've gone over -- I mentioned

it to you before, Villa Valencia, which is the same situation. And you're going to see the difference. I mean, I'm just...

Mayor Cason: Don't talk about (INAUDIBLE)...

Commissioner Lago: I mean, I'm not talk -- I'm just...

Commissioner Keon: The difference, though, with this particular project...

Commissioner Lago: There's...

Commissioner Keon: You know, this project sits along US 1. It sits directly adjacent to the Metrorail in an almost entirely mixed use or commercial area that is well separated from the single-family residential areas of our community. I think that we have a very, very, very serious responsibility to protect our single-family residential neighborhoods. But when there is development that is this distance from that single-family residential, and does not affect, and is not going to in any way affect that single-family residential area, and does improve our corridors, and does allow us to build, particularly residential use in the urban core, so you can stop this continuous building west. People are wanting to come back to the urban core. We talked about, you know, today we're setting aside dollars out of storm water fees for sea level rise. You know, we are exceedingly fortunate in this City of Coral Gables that the people that came here originally and built, built on a ridge, and that area along South Dixie Highway is that ridge. That area is not subject to flooding unless there is a massive, you know, increase in height. And we know that, you know, everything west of Red Road is subject to it. That was Everglades at one time, you know. Everything that is, you know, east of even Old Cutler or, you know, much east of us is also. This is an area where, you know, for public policy purposes, we should have density; we should have people living. It is in an area that is safe. It is an area that is solid. It is an area that is right next to transportation. If we want to change this dependence on automobiles, we need to begin to develop in a better way. Now, I really applaud Commissioner Withers when

he was here this morning, and he said to us, you know, we tried to do the Mile for so long and, you know, we're thankful to the group of people that are here that now you have done it. You know, the City is -- we are growing up. It doesn't mean we lose that -- our -- the character or the neighborhood feeling or the aesthetics or all of the things that has made Coral Gables great. Those things remain. But we are a city that is coming into, you know, an age where people are going to -- are again moving back into our core. And you know what? We need to make good decisions as to how we're going to do that. Personally, I am very happy with this project, and I am very supportive of this project because it does all of the things that I would ask a project at that place to do, considering sea level rise, considering transportation, considering that it's distanced from our single-family residential neighborhoods. I mean, that's why Villa Valencia is an entirely different topic, entirely different topic because it's right in the middle of it. But this...

Commissioner Lago: No.

Commissioner Keon: Is not. This is in an area where people -- you know, where we can really encourage transportation-oriented development and whatever. So, I am very happy with it. And thank you, Mr. Trias.

Mayor Cason: Alright.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, the other things that I was a little bit concerned about.

Commissioner Lago: Since you mentioned -- let me just answer you in regards to why I brought that project up. It's because when it's reviewed and it'll come before us, you'll see that height is the same question that's discussed. And if you really think about the importance of height and what can be done with that height, then you can start discussing open space. So, that's the only reason why I brought it up here. Because, again, it goes back to what Mr. -- what George said, what Mr. Hernandez said. Yeah, you can just take a project and go lot line to lot line, but then

you lose that 47 percent open space, so that's key. So, that's why I brought that project up and you're going to see.

Commissioner Slesnick: I agree with Commissioner Keon with a lot of your proposals. However, everyone wants to come to Coral Gables. There's no shortage of people wanting to move to Coral Gables. And we've been declared the best play city, the best this kind of city and so forth -- the best restaurant city. But right now, if you look at Downtown Dadeland, that area...

Commissioner Keon: It's horrible.

Commissioner Slesnick: Where it's one condominium and high-rise after another, or you go to Brickell at the other end, I just do not want to see Coral Gables have a 16-story building right on US 1 for the sake of development. I mean...

Commissioner Keon: No, I understand that.

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay.

Commissioner Keon: And I understand we will have differences of opinion.

Mayor Cason: I think it's...

Commissioner Keon: But I will tell you in looking at the project that, you know -- and I'm glad Mr. Berkowitz is not going to build his project and is going to sell his land because, I'm going to tell you, I would rather see that 16-story building than any sort of a project that looks like that. And that's what you're going to get if you don't allow for some of these other things. But you know, I mean, aside from that, that is a difference in opinion or whatever, and I don't think it's a matter that, you know, we still protect our single-family residences. We don't allow apartment

buildings, you know, on Granada and Andalusia. I mean, we're never going to allow those things. And so we move it where we believe it could work. I would approve a project where it is that I believe it is appropriate. I would never approve it in that close proximity, you know, to - - or that faces or -- you know, a single-family residential. And I know that, you know, with the Paseo project, I feel the same way. It's on US-1. It's away from the single-family residential neighborhood, and it gives us, you know, an opportunity to improve our corridors. And you know, we will all have differences of opinion, and yet, we remain respectful and collegial. So, I mean, it's fine. That's fine.

Commissioner Slesnick: I think the Mayor wants to move on, but just one more point is that I think this is a beautiful project.

Commissioner Keon: Yeah.

Commissioner Slesnick: And one of the reasons why is because there's so much City-owned land right next to it that they can develop the park, as well as the Underline...

Commissioner Keon: County-owned, yeah.

Commissioner Slesnick: And so that's going to improve the value of whatever they build there for the restaurants...

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Commissioner Slesnick: For the people that are coming to that section of town, and I think they will. And because we have the trolley, which Commissioner Kerdyk started, and going across US 1 now to other parts of -- it's going to make that whole area very, very popular and thrive, so I don't ever see it becoming a ghost town or whatever. So, I like the project. I'm just saying that there's no reason to build for building's sake when something there could be a compromise.

Mayor Cason: Alright.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor...

Commissioner Keon: Right, but I think what they're telling you is that no matter what you build there, you would have to go to that height to get over the Metrorail, whether it was a single building, a double building, whatever.

Commissioner Slesnick: I know, but it's -- they're also...

Commissioner Keon: But that's okay.

Commissioner Slesnick: Saying they're building the hotel rooms there, so you're going to get them right next -- I don't see the reason when you're granting extra height, you're looking for a variance, and I mean, this is an extreme variance going from 110 -- 100 floor -- 100 feet to 121 to 160.

City Attorney Leen: I just wanted to say, Mr. Mayor, I know you're going to ask about the trolley. But before I do that, I received a correction for the record. It's 12 stories. That's what you're telling me? A hundred and sixty feet, 12 stories, not 16 stories.

Commissioner Keon: Twelve stories.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, it's not 16 stories.

Commissioner Keon: Yeah, 12 stories.

Mayor Cason: No, stories are not as important as...

Commissioner Slesnick: A hundred and sixty feet.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, and the issue of the trolley. You know, I serve on the -- I'm the liaison to the Chamber of Commerce, and I've always -- I said to them from the very beginning when I first went to the Chamber of Commerce, is -- to be the liaison is that, you know, I really had very little involvement in the business community in our City, and not a great deal of knowledge of the business community in our city. You know, I lived in the residential community for well over 40 years. I was active in the community. I was active with my children. So, my life and my knowledge was pretty much in the residential community. And I'm very grateful to the Chamber, and particularly, to Mark and the people in the Chamber that have given me the opportunity to really learn about the business district and the needs of a business district and those things. So, you know, when I saw this issue of the -- on the trolley, I thought, you know -- and I asked Ramon if the applicant proffered this or was this an idea imposed on the applicant in order to get the permit by either staff, or the Planning and Zoning Board, or somebody else. And he said, no, it was not proffered by the applicant. It was a condition that was placed on the applicant that they felt if they were going to get a permit, they probably had to somehow agree with. And so, in talking to Mark, I said to him, you know, \$2.5 million is a very significant amount of money. This isn't whatever. And so, and in talking to Craig also, I said, you know, I think it is, you know -- it's not extortion, but it is exaction. Is that right? I mean, the word is exaction that -- you know, and if there was a nexus between this project and the University of Miami, I would tell you maybe there's a reason to have a -- you know, to try to have them put in a line from the site to the University of Miami, but there is no nexus. And so, I don't think it's appropriate to charge them or this particular -- this fee at all. I think that, as they build density along our corridors, if they want to help support our transportation system and they want to provide for an additional trolley -- you know, we operate that anyway, so it's an operational system that's, you know, it's a city cost. It's a public benefit, whatever, you know. If to -- you know, they want to add it, fine. But I think to charge them this \$2.5 million, you know, to cover the cost for 25 years, I think that that is -- I don't think it's

appropriate at all, not at all. And I asked -- so, I asked Mark, I said to him, Mark, when people come here or business come here and they look here, you know, if we do these types of things to them, what does that say about us as a city? How does that encourage or discourage people from coming here, or maybe Javier is even the person that can answer that question for us also.

City Attorney Leen: So, can I (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Cason: I agree with you in terms of the monetary amount. I think I would like to see more trolleys running between Paseo Riviera, connecting with the University of Miami because it makes -- again, it impacts the traffic...

Commissioner Keon: Right, right.

Mayor Cason: In a positive way. So, I'd like to see a couple trolleys.

Commissioner Keon: Well, but I think if they would provide us with one trolley, you know, our trolley system would then -- could incorporate it into, you know, the system...

City Attorney Leen: Before you hear anything from...

Commissioner Keon: Or whatever.

City Attorney Leen: Staff, can I just comment on the exaction issue? I was asked what is the concept, and I said it's the concept of exaction. Basically, what your authority is, is there's not an ordinance that obviously requires payment into the trolley system. So, what this is about is a condition of approval. In doing a condition of approval relating to the trolley, what you -- you look for two things. First -- and I'm not saying that this is an unlawful exaction. All I'm saying is that's the concept that you would apply. And it's ultimately up to the Commission to decide, and that can be reviewed by a court. So, the two conditions that you look at are, one, is there a

nexus between whatever the condition being imposed is and this project? So, if this project is adding increased stress on transportation -- and of course, one of the reasons for the project is -- one of the reasons for the increased height that's being proffered is that it's right next to the Metrorail, and obviously, our trolley is right near there too, so there very well may be a nexus. But then the second issue is roughly proportional. And what that means is that whatever you impose -- certainly, they could proffer whatever they want and they proffered a trolley. But if you're going to impose a condition, whatever you impose has to be roughly proportional to the impact that this project is going to cause on the trolley system. And then if you're going to put a restriction like, for example, it has to -- that this is going to go for a trolley between here and UM, that has to be both related and also roughly proportional, once again. So, that's ultimately within your sound discretion and you should -- in order to evaluate it, you should ask the applicant, you'd ask the Parking director, and you'd ask your Planning and Zoning director and get their input, and then you would make the decision. You could accept a proffer or you could impose something more than that, but again, it has to be -- there has to be a nexus and it has to be roughly proportional to the impact.

Mayor Cason: And that could be worked on between First and Second?

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Commissioner Keon: But I'm -- I think that...

Mayor Cason: Very good point.

Commissioner Keon: We need to decide whether...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Commissioner...

Commissioner Keon: Or not we feel that that is inappropriate or some other proffer by the applicant would be more appropriate.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, we are hearing the comments.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I think, Mayor, between first and second reading, we'll be able to meet with staff, we'll be able to meet with the applicant. We have been strong advocates for a community benefits process, which prices out linkages to the project that benefit the community. This is a perfect example of how that can be calculated out, and we would look forward to bringing that to you at the Second Reading.

Commissioner Lago: Further refine it.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Commissioner Keon: Right. The other...

Mayor Cason: At this point...

Commissioner Keon: The one other thing I'd ask is with regard to the plan for the Underline. And we know that, you know, when they're building on the site, you know, you may be driving trucks and stuff across there, so I don't know that you would do the landscaping prior to finishing your project. Usually, they put in the landscaping last, that, at least, though, the architect that you're using is Mr. Parsley, maybe at the time of permitting, we could at least have a design, a nice, you know, design that will be submitted as part of the project. The design will be available to us. And I already see in here, in the conditions that there is a bond. There is a

bond for that design. So, as long as we have a design when we permit and we have a bond for that design, I would be satisfied with that.

Mayor Cason: We're covered.

Commissioner Keon: Do you -- is that okay?

Mayor Cason: Alright. Let's do this.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Mayor Cason: We've had a very good three hours of discussion. Let me ask, City Attorney, as we go through E-11 -- tell us what it is we're doing with E-10. We'll vote on each of these as we go through.

City Attorney Leen: Certainly. So, the first item is a -- is the Comprehensive Plan text and map amendment. And what that does is it -- it's basically changing the land use from industrial to mixed use, removing the mixed use overlay district land use for this property. In voting on this, you would also be accepting the factual findings that support the Comprehensive Plan change. This is a legislative item. Mr. Bass, do you have anything to add with that? Anyone else?

Mayor Cason: The Vice Mayor...

Vice Mayor Quesada: I just -- I'm sorry.

Mayor Cason: Wants a quickie.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I just have one more question. I know we were off on a (INAUDIBLE). This is a very quick one. Mr. City Attorney, the height of the FPL lines...

City Attorney Leen: The FPL lines.

Vice Mayor Quesada: What's the height of it? I forget. Was it 85, was it 77?

City Attorney Leen: In this area?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah.

City Attorney Leen: They're at their highest, so I believe it's...

Commissioner Keon: One twenty.

City Attorney Leen: Eighty-five. And near the...

Vice Mayor Quesada: And that runs...

City Attorney Leen: Passport...

Vice Mayor Quesada: That will run along the Metrorail line?

City Attorney Leen: Yes, and near the passport office, they may even go higher, so -- because we didn't -- remember, we didn't demolish that office. We're using it as a passport office and the Commission supported that, so...

Vice Mayor Quesada: The lowest habitable height, Mr. Hernan -- I'm sorry I'm cutting you off.

City Attorney Leen: It's alright.

Vice Mayor Quesada: But you answered my question. Thank you. The lowest height that a unit will be is 101 feet, 34 and 66?

Mr. Hernandez: The 66 was a diagonal measure, so (INAUDIBLE)...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Oh, okay. I'm just...

Mr. Hernandez: Twenty-six and fifty-five, around eighty feet.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Eighty.

Mayor Cason: Maybe it'll go underground, you never know. Maybe they won't...

Mr. Hernandez: Twenty-six and fifty-five is eighty-one, right? Yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, if we went -- so even if there was -- and I'm going back to what Commissioner Lago said -- even if between first and second reading...

Mr. Hernandez: Seventy-six, I'm sorry, seventy-six.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, even if you guys went to the 120 feet height, then all those units would have powerlines in their faces.

Mayor Cason: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah. And I was going to proffer that after you...

Vice Mayor Quesada: And at...

Commissioner Lago: After you...

Vice Mayor Quesada: One sixty -- I'm sorry, but and then at 160...

Commissioner Lago: It still doesn't matter. It's the same thing.

Vice Mayor Quesada: No, it's not. You have maybe one floor, if that.

Mr. Hernandez: Two floors would be above it at the 160.

Mayor Cason: No.

Mr. Hernandez: But remember, it's...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, but I...

Mr. Hernandez: One...

Commissioner Lago: I just -- I don't feel comfortable about the 160. I think it's a little bit too high for me.

Vice Mayor Quesada: But you're comfortable with powerlines right outside those windows?

Mr. Hernandez: Eighty-one, thank you.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And what's the height, Craig?

City Attorney Leen: The three heights...

Vice Mayor Quesada: You said it could be higher.

City Attorney Leen: Are 77, 81 and 85, as I recall, feet. And I believe in this section -- although, I don't have the numbers before me -- it's at 85. I believe it's at the highest in this area. This was one of the focuses of the Commission, this particular street and area.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I know. I remember we discussed it because of what we knew -- it was even before. It was even with just the Gables residential site is when we had been discussing it.

Commissioner Lago: Listen, why don't we just have staff take a look at it...

Mayor Cason: Between now and the...

Commissioner Lago: And maybe the applicant bring us something on second reading and just a little bit more -- with a little bit more focus in regards to not only the Metrorail, but also where the proposed powerlines are going to be.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: I want something visual. I don't want to just see numbers.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Commissioner Keon: We have -- Craig has a...

Commissioner Lago: No, but I mean something that...

Commissioner Keon: Well, we have a thing with all of the powerlines.

Commissioner Lago: We have...

Commissioner Keon: We have a diagram with the powerlines.

Commissioner Lago: Two spectacular architects here. Let them design something on a PowerPoint presentation so we can show the residents. That's important to me.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: Because, by the way -- I'm sorry, one last thing -- if you go on 37th Avenue, you're going to see a project that right before you get to Coral Way, there's a project on the City of Miami side that has powerlines, and I think they're 30 feet from the actual balcony of the project.

Mayor Cason: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: You know what I'm talking about? That new building -- the new building that was built across from the Bank of America building?

Commissioner Keon: On Douglas.

Commissioner Lago: On Douglas. So, all I'm asking -- look, I'm going to vote in favor to move this to second reading. But all I'm asking is that the applicant take a real hard look with their design team to see what their ability is to reduce height in between First and Second reading. I know that we have some serious hindrances right now in regards to the Metrorail, in regards to the powerline. This is a very special site. Again, anything, in my opinion, is better than what's currently there. And again, I have the utmost respect for Mr. Berkowitz, but I think this is a far superior design for the city as a whole. So, I'm just asking -- let's try to be as sensitive as possible to the height issue here. I agree with Commissioner Slesnick -- not a hundred percent,

but I agree with you to a certain extent, and let's see how we can bring down the height of the building to a certain extent.

Mayor Cason: Craig, anything else?

Commissioner Lago: Without compromising on the 47 percent.

Mayor Cason: Craig, anything else you want to say in terms of...

City Attorney Leen: I'm just -- I'm pulling up the agreement now. Let me -- since I have it, let me just give you the exact. It actually looks like it's at 81 feet at that area.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And that's the height, the top of it?

City Attorney Leen: Yes. It looks like it's at 81, although it could...

Mayor Cason: It could be lower.

City Attorney Leen: It assumes 4520 Ponce is removed, so there may be some adjustments, but that's what it says on the...

Commissioner Lago: The sag. And don't forget the sag, too. Remember, we discussed about that. There's a sag.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And there's a sway.

Commissioner Lago: There's a sag and a sway. So, it's -- if you get a chance, go on 37th Avenue, right before you hit Coral Way on the right hand side, across from the Bank of America building, you will see something that will impact you, very impactful.

Mayor Cason: Isn't that what happens when you get old?

City Attorney Leen: So, Mr. Mayor, on number one, which is the comp plan change, I would recommend that if you are going to vote to approve it, that you also make all the findings of fact that support the comp plan change, and those are in staff's report.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Mayor Cason: Alright, E-10, do we have a motion?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Second.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon makes the motion. Vice Mayor seconds. City Clerk.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: No.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

(Vote: 4-1)

City Attorney Leen: And Mr. Chairman...

Mayor Cason: E-11.

City Attorney Leen: I just want to be clear that that includes the factual findings.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

City Attorney Leen: Everyone agree, okay. E-11, this item is the Zoning Code text and map amendments from industrial district to commercial district, and removing the south industrial mixed use district for this area. This is a legislative decision, and once again, you would incorporate the factual findings that support it.

Mayor Cason: Okay, motion.

City Attorney Leen: Make them yourself.

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon makes the motion.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Second.

Mayor Cason: Vice Mayor seconds. City Clerk.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: No.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

(Vote: 4-1)

Mayor Cason: E-12.

City Attorney Leen: Item E-12 is the amendment to the site specifics that relate to this parcel. Once again, the motion would incorporate any factual findings, and you'd make them yourself in support of it.

Mayor Cason: Okay, a motion?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon makes the motion. Vice Mayor seconds. City Clerk.

Commissioner Slesnick: No.

Commissioner Keon: Yes. For first reading, yes.

Commissioner Lago: For first reading, yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

(Vote: 4-1)

Mayor Cason: E-13.

City Attorney Leen: E-13 is the planned area development. This is the quasi-judicial item, and this is the one that includes the conditions of approval. So, you'd -- at this point, if you do move -- if you move it and it's approved, you probably should at least note whether you are -- because there is a condition of approval that lowers the height to 120 feet. So, maybe what you could do is you would remove that condition based on your prior approvals, but you would ask staff, as I believe you asked staff to work with the applicant to try to lower the height, and that's something that they would work on. Likewise, with the...

Commissioner Keon: With the trolley.

City Attorney Leen: Trolley...

Commissioner Keon: The mobility portion.

City Attorney Leen: You can accept the recommendation. You can just basically -- but you can ask them to work on that together, or you could accept their proffer and ask them to continue to work and that you may impose an additional condition.

Commissioner Lago: I'm going to make it very clear to the applicant. I think it's a spectacular project. I will not support this on second reading if you do not find a way -- I'm not asking you to remove floors, but I need you to lower the height. Do your best, okay, and I need you to work with staff in regards to the trolley. And I support Commissioner Keon, and I think the Mayor made a very concise statement in regards to the trolley issue. I support you on that. So, please do me a favor and let's work together. Staff recommended supposedly 120. You know, let's -- I'm not holding you to 120. I know 120's unfeasible. But let's just try to lower it as much as possible.

Mayor Cason: Do you want to make the motion?

Commissioner Lago: I make the motion.

City Attorney Leen: So, can I add something? So, for purposes of the motion, I would recommend removing -- based on what the Commission has indicated...

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

City Attorney Leen: Removing those two conditions, accepting the proffer, but also indicating that you may require more for the trolley requirement, and that will be decided at Second Reading.

Mayor Cason: Or something different.

Commissioner Lago: But with a clear understanding -- and this is something that I want Commissioner Slesnick to also jump on board, and maybe she won't support it, but I want you to think about it. Think about what I've requested from the astute architect, Mr. Hernandez. Please provide us with a detailed diagram, so that the residents and the business owners really understand what's going on here in this project, FP&L and the Metro. You know, give us a real detailed understanding. I think all that information, it will be provided to you by the City Attorney. Please, in between First and Second Reading.

Mayor Cason: You made the motion.

Commissioner Lago: Yes, sir.

Mayor Cason: Do we have a second?

Commissioner Keon: I'll second it.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon seconds.

Commissioner Keon: Second is that we have removed the mobility provision, and we removed the height restriction with the direction to discuss and come back to...

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Us with something based upon the direction given by the Commission.

Commissioner Lago: And also that the applicant understands the importance of having adequate mobility, you know, becoming involved in the trolley.

Commissioner Keon: Yep.

Commissioner Lago: But again, you know, change gears from the -- it was 2.4 or 2.5?

Commissioner Keon: Two point five, I think.

City Attorney Leen: So, to be clear, the Commission is removing those...

Commissioner Lago: But understand that -- but we're requesting you to be a community partner here, okay.

City Attorney Leen: But to be clear, though, just -- Commissioner Lago and Commissioner Keon, since you made the motion and seconded, to be clear, my understanding of the motion is that the Commission may impose this on Second Reading. They're removing them for first reading so that you can discuss it with staff. Staff can consider your proffer, and staff can discuss with you the height issues, and that issue will be considered again on second reading for a condition of approval imposed by the Commission, or for a proffer that's accepted by the Commission.

Mayor Cason: City Clerk.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: No.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

(Vote: 4-1)

Mayor Cason: Craig, in terms of E-14, do we just read it or what...

City Attorney Leen: No, I've read it into the record. This will come to you at the next meeting with the other items, and it will be considered at the same time. This is also quasi-judicial.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

City Attorney Leen: And so, you don't have to take action on it today.

Mayor Cason: Thank you very much. We're finished discussing this long item.