

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

June 9, 2016

Mr. Walter Foeman
City Clerk
City of Coral Gables
405 Biltmore Way, First Floor
Coral Gables, Florida 33134
wfoeman@coralgables.com
cityclerk@coralgables.com

**Re: Gables Station (215 and 251 South Dixie Highway)
Notice of Filing Transcript of May 11, 2016 City of Coral Gables
Planning & Zoning Board Meeting**

Dear Mr. Foeman,

This correspondence is transmitted on behalf of NP International USA, LLC (“NPI”) the applicant and developer of the mixed-use development commonly referred to as Gables Station located at 215 and 251 South Dixie Highway (the “Project”). The purpose of this correspondence is to place into the record the transcript of the May 11, 2016 City of Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Board Meeting (the “Transcript”) in advance of the June 14, 2016 City Commission hearing at which approvals for the Project are scheduled to be heard. Please incorporate into the record the entirety of the Transcript attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions concerning this correspondence.

Best Regards,



Jeffrey S. Bass
For the Firm

cc: Mr. Craig E. Leen, Esq., cleen@coralgables.com
Mr. Ramon Trias, rtrias@coralgables.com

1 CITY OF CORAL GABLES
 2 LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA)/
 3 PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING
 4 VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT
 5 CORAL GABLES CITY HALL
 6 405 BILTMORE WAY, COMMISSION CHAMBERS
 7 CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA
 8 WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2016, COMMENCING AT 6:03 P.M.

9 Board Members Present:
 10 Jeffrey Flanagan, Chairman
 11 Maria Alberro Menendez
 12 Marshall Bellin
 13 Frank Rodriguez
 14 Robert Behar
 15 Alberto Perez

16 City Staff and Consultant:
 17 Ramon Trias, Planning Director
 18 Craig E. Leen, City Attorney
 19 Scot Bolyard, Principal Planner
 20 Jill Menendez, Administrative Assistant
 21 Leonard Roberts, Economic Development Assistant Director
 22 Keving Kinney, Parking Director
 23 Yamilet Senespleda, Public Works City Engineer
 24 Also Participating:
 25 Mario Garcia-Serra, Esq., on behalf of Items 5-7
 Paul Savage, Esq., on behalf of Valencia Grande
 Hamed Rodriguez, Project Architect, on behalf of Items 5-7
 Sarat Dayal, on behalf of Item Number 8
 Marisa Plucino, on behalf of Item Number 8

1 THEREUPON:
 2 (The following proceedings were held.)
 3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Everybody's here.
 4 Jill, if you could call the roll, please.
 5 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 6 MR. BEHAR: Here.
 7 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?
 8 MR. BELLIN: Here.
 9 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?
 10 MR. GRABIEL: Here.
 11 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?
 12 MS. MENENDEZ: Here.
 13 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?
 14 MR. PEREZ: Here.
 15 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?
 16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Here.
 17 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Here.
 19 Okay. The second item on the agenda is the
 20 approval of the Minutes.
 21 MR. BEHAR: Make a motion for approval.
 22 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Motion and a second.
 23 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Second.
 24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Motion is second. Anybody
 25 have comments or changes to the Minutes from the last

1 Public Speakers:
 2 Magda Granda
 3 Ana Hernandez-Bravo
 4 Rita Gross
 5 J. Rip Holmes
 6 Kenneth Garcia
 7 Jose Gelabert-Navia
 8 Rolando Iglesias
 9 Sonia Blair
 10 Juan Castro Lopez
 11 Robert Parseley
 12 Rhonda Anderson
 13 Jackson Rip Holmes

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1 meeting?
 2 All right. Hearing none, Jill, if you could call
 3 the roll, please?
 4 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?
 5 For the Minutes.
 6 MR. BELLIN: The Minutes?
 7 THE SECRETARY: The Minutes.
 8 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Marshall, we're on the
 9 Minutes.
 10 MR. BELLIN: Okay.
 11 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?
 12 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.
 13 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?
 14 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.
 15 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?
 16 MR. PEREZ: Yes.
 17 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?
 18 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 19 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 20 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 21 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?
 22 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.
 23 The next item is, any changes to the agenda. I
 24 don't know of any.
 25 Okay. I don't have my sheet in front of me.

1 Charles, if you want to read all that in, that's
 2 fine.
 3 Oh, sorry, Mr. Trias?
 4 MR. TRIAS: If we have a lot of speakers that want
 5 to speak on the North Ponce, we may want to move that
 6 ahead on the agenda, which right now is the last item.
 7 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay.
 8 MR. TRIAS: But I think that we may have citizens
 9 that are here for that.
 10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Let's-- maybe by a
 11 raise of hands, how many citizens are here on the North
 12 Ponce discussion?
 13 Raise of hands.
 14 Okay. And how many citizens are here on the Villa
 15 Valencia Project?
 16 Okay. Does anybody have any objection to then
 17 moving the Ponce discussion to the top of the agenda?
 18 MS. MENENDEZ: My only concern is that we've
 19 deferred the first three items a couple of times. We
 20 would take them second. I mean, unless-- what are we
 21 going to do with the study? Are we just blessing it
 22 or--
 23 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
 24 Mr. Chairman, I think that the Villa Valencia
 25 should be relatively brief as a discussion. My

1 recommendation would be to take the North Ponce
 2 immediately afterward for the benefit of the citizens
 3 who are here.
 4 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. So you're suggesting we
 5 do Villa Valencia first, then the Ponce?
 6 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay. We have no problem with
 7 that.
 8 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: All right. We'll do that.
 9 Anybody on the Board have an issue with that?
 10 MR. GRABIEL: No.
 11 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: All right. So we'll do that.
 12 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Which one are we going on
 13 first?
 14 MR. MENENDEZ: We're going to go with--
 15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Villa Valencia and Ponce
 16 second.
 17 MR. BEHAR: No. Villa Valencia--
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Mr. Trias just thought that we
 19 should do Villa Valencia, and then Ponce second, is what
 20 I heard.
 21 MS. MENENDEZ: Right. But the Applicant has no
 22 problem with us taking Ponce first, if that's okay with
 23 you all. I don't have a problem.
 24 MR. TRIAS: It's up to you, Mr. Chairman.
 25 MS. MENENDEZ: If they don't have a problem, we

1 don't have a problem.
 2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: That's where I was going to
 3 start with.
 4 Okay. So resetting the agenda, it sounds like we
 5 will do the North Ponce discussion first, and then we'll
 6 go back to the regular order of the agenda, with the
 7 Villa Valencia next, and the balance of the items to
 8 follow.
 9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Can I bring up an issue before the
 10 Board, before we start?
 11 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Sure.
 12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Very briefly. We-- there's a
 13 special meeting that was set for May 17th, apparently,
 14 at the request of the Developer, based on timeframes
 15 that are involved. I am going to be out of town for ten
 16 days-- you know, I take my commitment to the Board and
 17 the City seriously, and I'd like to be here for that
 18 discussion, so I'd like to move that the meeting be
 19 rescheduled.
 20 I understand that what they're shooting for is
 21 some time in May, so they can make the June Commission
 22 meeting, which I respect, but-- like I'm back on the
 23 22nd. We have from the 22nd to the-- I don't know if
 24 there's 30 days in May or 31 days, but those days. So I
 25 make a motion to be rescheduled for a point in time in

1 May, after the 22nd.
 2 MR. WU: Mr. Chairman, if I may? We have
 3 committed with the Applicant to that timeframe, and we
 4 do have a quorum.
 5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Let me ask the City
 6 Attorney. I live within the notice area, and I received
 7 a Notice that said the hearing was going forward on the
 8 17th.
 9 Is there an issue with the fact that it's been
 10 noticed? Has it been advertised? What happens-- let's
 11 assume the Board--
 12 MR. COLLIER: It would have to be renoticed and
 13 readvertised if you're going to do a different date. So
 14 they'll have to send out a Notice and an advertisement,
 15 saying, basically, cancelled for the 17th, rescheduled
 16 for whatever date there is.
 17 So, I mean, there's certainly an expense
 18 associated with it, but that's-- you know, it will need
 19 to be done.
 20 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: But if there's-- if a hearing
 21 has been noticed--
 22 MR. COLLIER: Uh-huh.
 23 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: --Do we have to be here to
 24 open the hearing, and then end up resetting it?
 25 Either--

1 MR. COLLIER: Well, you could do it that way. I
2 mean, you could leave the hearing as scheduled, and open
3 the hearing, but there's a possibility that the hearing
4 might be held, depending on the Members of the Board
5 that are here.

6 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Right. I wouldn't ask that
7 everybody convene and then reschedule. I wouldn't ask
8 that. So, I mean, if that's the only way we can do it,
9 I withdraw the motion. But if it's-- and I don't really
10 know what I'm asking, because I don't really know what
11 the expense is, you know. But, again, I take my
12 commitment to the City and the citizenry seriously, and
13 I'd like to be here for that discussion.

14 MR. COLLIER: Well, I think you'd have to-- if you
15 weren't going to do basically a people come, open it up,
16 and then announce or schedule it to another date
17 certain, which wouldn't require readvertisement, if
18 you're going to say it tonight that we're not going to
19 hold it on the 17th, and we're going to change the date,
20 then I would-- I think you need to readvertise,
21 renote, and probably would post something on the door,
22 so that anybody that missed it will see that the 17th
23 has been rescheduled to another date.

24 I don't know what the costs are associated with
25 the advertising, but I'm sure Staff could assist you in

1 advising you in what costs are involved.

2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Robert.

3 MR. BELLIN: I'd like to make a motion.

4 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Wait, Marshall, one second.

5 MR. BEHAR: Let me bring up something, because I
6 will put it later on, on the record, that I originally
7 said I was going to be here, but because I met with that
8 Applicant on several occasions, I will choose to stay
9 out of it and recuse myself. So I don't know how many
10 Board Members will be here that evening, but I
11 originally said I would be here, I am not, so we may
12 want to notify the Applicant that you may not have, you
13 know-- if Frank is not here, I'm not here, I don't know
14 who else is not going to be here, there may not be a
15 quorum that day.

16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Right. So let's ask--
17 Marshall, you were going to say?

18 MR. BELLIN: I was going to make a motion to leave
19 the date as is.

20 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Well, we have one
21 motion on the table. We need a second, or, if we don't
22 get a second, it dies, and we can entertain an
23 alternative motion.

24 MR. RODRIGUEZ: We don't need a motion to keep it
25 as it is. I mean, if I don't get a second, you know,

1 that's it.

2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Right.

3 MS. MENENDEZ: Let me ask you, would we have a
4 quorum if-- because Robert's news is new, so would we
5 have a quorum on the 17th?

6 MR. TRIAS: I think we could ask the Board.
7 You're all here. We have five people confirmed. Now we
8 have four.

9 MR. GRABIEL: I'll be here.

10 MR. TRIAS: You'll be here.

11 MS. MENENDEZ: I'll be here.

12 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Two.

13 I'll be here, three.

14 MR. BELLIN: I'll be here.

15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Four, five.

16 MR. TRIAS: So it appears that we will have a
17 quorum.

18 MS. MENENDEZ: Then let me ask you, this time
19 constraint which deals with the Developer, when is the
20 drop dead date for them?

21 MR. TRIAS: The way I understand it is that they
22 were trying to see if they could get into the last
23 Commission meeting. It actually has to do with the
24 Commission meeting. They have to review and approve or
25 not the rezonings, and because during this summer the

1 Commission doesn't meet every two weeks, there are
2 months where there's only one meeting, there was some
3 issue that related to that.

4 MS. MENENDEZ: Right.

5 MR. TRIAS: The way I understand it, they need to
6 have it scheduled by May 24th at the Commission meeting.
7 May 24 is the date, right? I think.

8 MS. MENENDEZ: Right. But given that information,
9 when is your drop dead date that you would have to have
10 the information for the Commission meeting so that we
11 can see if there's a possibility of another date?

12 MR. TRIAS: Well, really, it's next week, so
13 Friday.

14 MS. MENENDEZ: So next week is cutting it already
15 short?

16 MR. TRIAS: Yes. But we also have to advertise
17 the meeting, so I don't think we can advertise for next
18 week.

19 MS. MENENDEZ: If we change it, you're saying?

20 MR. TRIAS: Yes, if we change it.

21 MS. MENENDEZ: I see.

22 MR. TRIAS: We could also open the meeting, and
23 then continue the meeting at another date, I suppose.

24 MR. RODRIGUEZ: That's not part of my motion. I
25 wouldn't ask people to come down here to do that.

1 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. So we have a motion on
2 the floor. We're waiting for a second.

3 Okay. No second. So the motion dies for lack of
4 a second.

5 MR. WU: Mr. Chair, if I can clarify Mr. Behar's
6 situation. If the attorney can counsel us whether Mr.
7 Behar can hear the case, because I don't know if there's
8 a conflict of interest, per se. He had met with--

9 MR. BEHAR: I had met with that Developer-- the
10 Applicant on several occasions to be the architect of
11 the project. They did not go with our company-- our
12 firm, but I think, I will-- since I met with them on
13 multiple occasions, I would rather stay out.

14 MR. WU: But the question is whether you can make
15 a decision based on the record that will be presented at
16 the meeting?

17 MR. COLLIER: Well, I would say, since the Member
18 has indicated discomfort because he was so involved with
19 the project-- it's not like just a passing conversation,
20 but his fair involvement in employment, I can appreciate
21 why he may feel it would be best to recuse himself, so I
22 certainly would accept that on its face value.

23 I mean, generally speaking, if you disclose all of
24 your ex parte contact, but in this unusual case where
25 they were looking to them for employment, and they

1 didn't receive the employment, I could see where there
2 would be the appearance of a concern, and I think it
3 would be justifiable to recuse yourself in this
4 circumstance. I'm not saying you absolutely have to.
5 I'm saying, I think it certainly would be prudent to do
6 so if you felt uncomfortable about deciding it.

7 MR. WU: And this doesn't qualify for filing a
8 Conflict of Interest Form, because we do have to have a
9 Conflict of Interest Form?

10 MR. COLLIER: Well, we may need to do that. We
11 may need to have that, and I want to consult with the
12 City Attorney on whether you need to file that conflict,
13 but since you just may not be here that night, but I'll
14 check with the City Attorney about filing that conflict
15 of interest.

16 Perfect timing. Do you want me to review the
17 issue or--

18 MR. LEEN: I received a text from you.

19 MR. COLLIER: Okay. Well, the issue is that you
20 met with the--

21 MR. BEHAR: Let's go back a little bit. There was
22 a motion from a Board Member to defer the meeting-- the
23 next meeting-- special meeting that we have either on--

24 MR. WU: The 17th.

25 MR. BEHAR: --The 17th, and I-- to put it on the

1 record that I was not going to be here, to make sure
2 that there was a quorum or not, okay.

3 I didn't know who was going to be here. I made--
4 put on the record that I will be recusing myself from
5 that meeting, because I met several times with the
6 Applicant. So I felt that it would be best if I was not
7 here, you know. That's what prompted this conversation.

8 MR. COLLIER: And the meeting was relating to
9 possibly being employed as the architect, so it's
10 understandable that it would be appropriate for him to
11 recuse himself. I didn't know whether he needed to
12 file-- I don't know your process to--

13 MR. LEEN: Mr. Behar spoke with the Deputy City
14 Attorney and myself, and informed us of the-- that he
15 had met with the Applicant regarding potentially being
16 the Architect.

17 Also, he is within a thousand feet of the
18 property, and has some views on the matter. So my
19 understanding is, he is going to be recusing himself,
20 and would be appearing before the Commission later as a
21 private citizen, not in his official capacity, to
22 provide his views on the--

23 MR. COLLIER: Then, clearly, it would be
24 appropriate for him to recuse yourself.

25 MR. LEEN: So, in light of that, yes, you should

1 recuse yourself. As to whether there's a conflict of
2 interest requiring you to fill out the form, remember,
3 there's also a Statute which allows in cases where there
4 may be a perceived bias, you're allowed to-- which could
5 be, for example, the fact that you have a position on
6 the matter, that is a basis to recuse.

7 We can determine whether you need to file the form
8 or not, and we'll let you know. But what would happen
9 is, in the next meeting, when that came up-- it's a
10 special meeting, so you wouldn't even come, but
11 typically if you were here, you would stand up and you
12 would recuse yourself. You can do that, if you'd like,
13 at the next meeting, but you've done it here, so you
14 have stated, on the record, your issues.

15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you, Craig.

16 MR. LEEN: Now, as to-- I also received a question
17 whether the Board can defer--

18 MR. COLLIER: Yeah. I think that they've resolved
19 it, that they are going to meet on the 17th.

20 MR. LEEN: Okay.

21 MR. COLLIER: The motion didn't-- died for lack of
22 a second, so they are meeting on the 17th.

23 MR. LEEN: Okay. I understand. Thank you very
24 much.

25 MS. MENENDEZ: Thank you.

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1 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
2 MR. WU: Mr. Chairman, we have some opening
3 statements.
4 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes, if you could, Charles.
5 Thank you.
6 MR. WU: Good evening. The Board is composed of
7 seven Members. Four Members of the Board shall
8 constitute a quorum, and the affirmative vote of four
9 Members of the Board present shall be necessary for the
10 adoption of any motion.
11 Lobbyist Registration and Disclosure, any person
12 who acts as a lobbyist pursuant to the City of Coral
13 Gables Ordinance 2006-11 must register with the City
14 Clerk prior to engaging in lobbying activities or
15 presentations before City Staff, Boards, Committees,
16 and/or the City Commission. A copy of the ordinance is
17 available in the Office of the City Clerk. Failure to
18 register and provide proof of registration shall
19 prohibit your ability to present to the Board.
20 I now officially call the City of Coral Gables
21 Planning and Zoning Board of May 11, 2016 to order. The
22 time is 6:17.
23 Roll call.
24 Notice regarding ex parte communication, please be
25 advised that this Board is a quasi-judicial Board and

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1 the items on the agenda are quasi-judicial in nature,
2 which requires the Board Members to disclose all ex
3 parte communication and site visits. The Board Member
4 should also state that his or her decision will be based
5 on substantial, competent evidence, and testimony
6 presented on the record today.
7 Do any of the Members of the Board have such a
8 communication or site visit to disclose at this time?
9 Let the record show there's been none.
10 Swearing in, anyone who speaks today must complete
11 a roster on the podium. We ask you to print clearly so
12 the official records of your name and address will be
13 correct.
14 Now, with the exception of attorneys, all persons
15 who wish to speak on agenda items this evening, please
16 rise to be sworn in.
17 Anyone who wants to speak tonight, please rise and
18 be sworn in.
19 (Thereupon, all participants were sworn.)
20 MR. WU: We ask that you silence all cell phones,
21 pagers, all electronic devices at this time.
22 Thank you.
23 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.
24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: I'm sorry, we're going to go
25 with Item Number 13 first, right, Mr. Trias?

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1 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay.
3 MR. BELLIN: Excuse me.
4 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes, Marshall.
5 MR. BELLIN: I'd like to have a little further
6 discussion on the order in which we hear things. My
7 feeling is that the overlay district issue is going to
8 take quite a bit of time, because there's a lot of
9 things to cover, and if the Villa Valencia will be a
10 short presentation, we may be better off doing that
11 first.
12 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. We've already set the
13 agenda, and the Applicant has already agreed that
14 they're okay with taking North Ponce first.
15 MR. BELLIN: Okay.
16 MR. TRIAS: So if you don't mind, I'll begin the
17 North Ponce discussion, and I want to thank everybody
18 for joining us today.
19 We had an informal meeting in the neighborhood a
20 few days ago, and this appears to be a very formal
21 setting, but it's also a continuation of that meeting,
22 from the point of view that no decisions are going to be
23 made, and the reason for this or the idea behind this
24 presentation is to get some direction, some priority,
25 some idea of what's important for the City.

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1 I'll go very fast to the PowerPoint. I already
2 gave it to our wonderful neighbors and some other people
3 at different times. But the important thing is we have
4 George Merrick, his portrait is right here, and his work
5 is all over the City, and this was one of the very first
6 renderings that he prepared.
7 Douglas entrance, which was built pretty much--
8 you know, the center area of that drawing is exactly the
9 way it was implemented. It was a great vision of
10 quality and beauty and elegance, and so on, and that
11 neighborhood is one of the best areas of the City, and
12 it's unique. Unique in many ways, because it does have
13 some very, very different, very specific issues that we
14 are trying to address.
15 Now, we've had a very extensive public outreach
16 effort. We began with some public meetings last summer.
17 We are continuing through those conversations, but when
18 I say that, I also want to remind everyone that this has
19 been a conversation that has been going on for over 20
20 years-- actually, about 30 years or so, in different
21 planning efforts, and planning plans, which have not
22 really resulted in too many changes, and I think now we
23 can make some strategic modifications to some of our
24 regulations and some changes to the vision to be able to
25 reflect more clearly what the community-- what the

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1 community wants.

2 We included some of the feedback that we got from

3 the neighbors in your packet. It's all there. You can

4 read through it. It's very valuable ideas about the

5 community's vision, which generally deals with

6 protecting the character of the place; the small scale;

7 the fact that there's a lot of uses; the fact that Ponce

8 De Leon is a very interesting active area, and some of

9 the features that I think got lost through the years

10 perhaps. For example, one of the things I learned some

11 time ago is that this area was originally named the

12 Garden District, and the fact that all of this small

13 apartment buildings have these front yards really,

14 really creates a very valuable visual impact in the

15 community, and that, in fact, now we are looking at very

16 different projects being proposed; projects that may

17 change the existing character if not done properly or

18 may actually enhance it, depending on the quality of the

19 scale, the change of scale from the relatively small

20 garden apartments, the real garden apartment of the

21 historic city to much larger projects that are

22 different, that are different because of the fact that

23 now we have parking requirements.

24 For example-- I mean, I'll show you a map later on

25 that shows the buildings before the parking requirements

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1 were implemented, and the fact that parking is hard to

2 deal with at this scale. The fact that there's an

3 inherent contradiction between a very high density

4 corridor in the center, and how do you keep some of the

5 smaller scale buildings around, and ultimately the

6 discussion about architecture, how to do high quality

7 buildings as we always aspire to do in this City.

8 If we look at the area, it's very compact, very

9 built out, very few gaps, a few here and there, some

10 significant vacant properties, but I think everything is

11 fairly identifiable, and some very nice historic

12 buildings.

13 Now, my diagram that I'd like to point out is this

14 one. In peach, we have the buildings prior to 1964.

15 1964 is the year in which parking-- minimum parking

16 requirements are introduced to the Coral Gables Zoning

17 Codes. There was zoning, but zoning was not attached to

18 parking. So, interestingly, if you look at the peach,

19 they tend to be the smaller buildings. You know, very

20 nice fabric throughout. And then the red are the

21 buildings that are done afterward, the ones that

22 actually have the parking. So you can see there's a big

23 difference in terms of the scale, much larger buildings,

24 and a real change in terms of the character of the

25 place. So that's one of the big issues, one of the big

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1 ideas that I think we've discovered as we analyze this

2 area.

3 Now, the goal is to make North Ponce better, and

4 that means many things. And we gave you a list of-- an

5 outline of multiple ideas that was reviewed by the

6 Commission recently, and the Commission thought it was

7 very interesting and very good, and they specifically

8 said that they wanted you, as the Planning and Zoning

9 Board, to look at it and come up with some strategies.

10 Those recommendations can be organized into four

11 basic points. One, in terms of zoning, we think or we

12 recommend that you look at two overlays; one for Ponce,

13 which is a mixed-use overlay, and then two conservation

14 district overlays for the areas around Ponce De Leon on

15 either side.

16 Then there's some planning and preservation

17 studies that would be very helpful.

18 Then some capital improvement projects, and some

19 very strategic street projects and landscape

20 improvements.

21 And then, finally, some community amenities that I

22 think would enhance the quality of life.

23 So the zoning overlays, as I said, Ponce De Leon

24 Boulevard is already a road that is becoming fairly

25 mixed-used and so on. So we were trying to see if we

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1 could up with a way to organize those changes that are

2 taking place, and that one deals with mapping and deals

3 with some design guidelines.

4 In addition, on either side, on the east and the

5 west of Ponce De Leon, there's the MF-2 Zoning. As you

6 know, it deals with multi-family. We believe that some

7 of the existing buildings, some of the older buildings

8 have difficulty fitting in with the certain

9 requirements, so a conservation district that allows for

10 some specific and targeted regulations, we think, would

11 be very helpful.

12 Basically, we believe that there should be some

13 benefits toward historic buildings, some understanding--

14 that buildings before 1964 didn't have parking, so,

15 therefore, parking requirements should be looked at more

16 carefully.

17 Some enhancement of the opportunity to do small

18 infill as opposed to the larger projects only. Right

19 now the Code truly encourages larger buildings with

20 assemblance of land and so on.

21 And, finally, some better landscape standards.

22 These are the buildings, very nice, good scale, good

23 architecture in general, and currently not allowed by

24 the Code. Right now, you cannot build these buildings,

25 and basically the reason is that the parking

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1 requirements make it very difficult to do such a
 2 building. So some of the additional benefits would be
 3 to allow bed and breakfast, home office, live-work,
 4 pre-school.
 5 Right now we already have the TDR sending site,
 6 which you reviewed some meetings ago, and it was
 7 approved by the Commission, and some signage and some
 8 development, encouragements and fine tuning of the Code.
 9 The idea is to try to preserve what we like and
 10 encourage compatible development in the future. Some of
 11 the details on that will be prepared later on, but that
 12 generally maybe deals with some setbacks and some
 13 parking requirements.
 14 The mixed-use overlay is a little bit more
 15 complicated, in the sense that it deals with the
 16 fundamental issue in the Code. It's relatively
 17 straight-forward to do a large building. It's very
 18 difficult to do a smaller building in the commercial
 19 areas. So we're trying to see if it becomes simpler to
 20 do that.
 21 Now, currently the regulations are illustrated by
 22 the top image. As you can see, you have a very large
 23 building-- and there's not too much of a design
 24 requirement in the Code. We are thinking more in terms
 25 of having something similar to what you see in the

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1 bottom and for your review, in which the building's form
 2 is shaped a little bit more clearly, and with more
 3 detail, and where parking is hidden within the building.
 4 There's a requirement for a liner building. For
 5 example, along Ponce De Leon. Right now what I hear is
 6 a lot of objection to the larger buildings as the big
 7 podium of parking right smack in the front of the
 8 building. That doesn't quite lead to a very high
 9 quality pedestrian environment.
 10 So those are just some of the ideas-- just ideas
 11 that we are proposing to you. This is one example of
 12 the buildings that are allowed right now by the Code.
 13 So if we are able to shape them better, perhaps we could
 14 have a nicer environment.
 15 This is what happens now. You have all of that
 16 parking, and regardless of the architecture and the
 17 effort, it's still parking, and it's not exactly the
 18 most attractive building.
 19 Now, there are some planning and preservation
 20 studies that I think need to be done. The historic
 21 building inventory needs to be reviewed and improved,
 22 and I think that's ongoing.
 23 There's also some opportunity for some bicycle and
 24 pedestrian through routes that could connect to the City
 25 of Miami, linkages and so on, and even toward the west.

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1 And, then, in terms of capital improvements, which
 2 means projects, to cancel things the City's typically
 3 build, we have some ideas for parks acquisition, tree
 4 succession. Even some-- maybe some right of ways could
 5 be redesigned so they have bike lanes, and they don't
 6 have as much asphalt for automobiles.
 7 And, finally we are trying also to take a close
 8 look at public parking, which is necessary, given the
 9 fact that, as we saw before, many of the buildings were
 10 built prior to having minimum parking requirements.
 11 So I'll conclude with this image, which gives you
 12 a sense of what's there now. This is Ponce De Leon, and
 13 East Ponce, and a wonderful park in between. And if you
 14 fill those gaps, and you enhance the sidewalks, and you
 15 have more landscape, and you enlarge public spaces, we
 16 have an opportunity to really, really transform the area
 17 into an even more beautiful place.
 18 So I'll stop my presentation here. I think we
 19 want to hear from the citizens who are here. And,
 20 again, my goal today is to have some discussion and to
 21 have some direction, in terms of what you think is most
 22 important, and the kind of things you would like to see
 23 soon before you, so that you can take action. So thank
 24 you very much.
 25 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.

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1 Anybody from the Board have any comment?
 2 MR. BEHAR: Should we wait to hear from the public
 3 before?
 4 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: We can do that.
 5 Let me ask, as a discussion item, it does not make
 6 it a public hearing item, but we are going to take
 7 public comment, so how many--
 8 Jill, do we have speaker cards?
 9 THE SECRETARY: We have about five speakers on
 10 this item.
 11 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. So we'll ask the
 12 speakers to limit it to keeping their comments pertinent
 13 and three minutes, if we have five speakers, I think
 14 that's appropriate. So we'll take public comment, if
 15 anybody has anything they'd like to add to the
 16 presentation or comments to the Board.
 17 We will open the podium or the hearing up. Jill,
 18 if you have names, do you want to read the first name?
 19 THE SECRETARY: Magda Granda.
 20 MS. GRANDA: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.
 21 I'm not a speaker, I'm a concerned citizen. I am a
 22 property owner and resident of Coral Gables since 1980.
 23 I live at 49 Majorca Avenue, since 1991.
 24 We, in my building, my condo, we are all concerned
 25 about changes in the neighborhood. I'm all for changes,

1 okay. I'm not against progress, but I believe the
2 entrance on Douglas to Alhambra Circle, it's an original
3 Merrick entrance.

4 That small area east of Ponce to Alhambra should
5 be-- should keep the character that it has right now. I
6 don't oppose building around us, but what I don't want
7 to see is, number one, retail space, commercial space in
8 a residential neighborhood.

9 We already have a situation with very heavy
10 traffic Monday through Friday, which I call it the
11 "working week," okay. On the weekends, we don't have a
12 situation. We don't have off-street parking that we can
13 use Monday through Friday. Why? Because people that
14 work in Coral Gables park on our streets, because we
15 have no meters. It's not that I want meters, okay. Let
16 me make it very simple.

17 Then we have the school-- the elementary school,
18 the traffic from the parents picking up the kids doesn't
19 bother me at all. What bothers me is when I see people
20 speeding on a school zone, okay. Myself, when I'm going
21 to get out of my parking garage, I have to be very
22 careful, because the people that are coming in from
23 Alhambra driving-- you know, the street curves when it
24 comes out-- Majorca curves when it comes out to
25 Alhambra. You can't see the traffic coming, and they

1 units, what's going to happen to us? We're going to be
2 swallowed up, and that's just the beginning, because
3 there is another block there that only has one small
4 condo on the corner. The rest is all rental. All of
5 that is going to come down and another humongous
6 building is going to be built there, so I'm looking at
7 the future, okay.

8 Also, you can check with Code Enforcement, and
9 Patty, the supervisor, knows me. I'm always calling
10 her.

11 By the way, you look so familiar. Did I see you
12 yesterday?

13 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay, ma'am, if we could keep
14 it pertinent to--

15 MS. GRANDA: I'm not looking at my watch, I'm
16 sorry.

17 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: You're well beyond your three
18 minutes, so if we could wrap up.

19 MS. GRANDA: Okay. When you're representing the
20 City--

21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: If we can ask you to wrap up
22 your thoughts, we'd appreciate that.

23 MS. GRANDA: I'd just ask of you to please be
24 concerned about the citizens. We pay taxes, okay. We
25 vote, also, all right. So don't change our

1 are speeding on that little street.

2 We have one stop sign. I have been asking for
3 four stop signs-- four-way stop signs for years right on
4 the corner of the school, Galiano and Majorca. They put
5 one on the other school, but-- you know, by Phillips
6 Park, but not over there.

7 Do any of you live in the area that I'm talking
8 about?

9 MR. WU: Mr. Chair, I believe it's three minutes.

10 MR. FLANAGAN: Thank you, Charles.

11 MS. GRANDA: Any of the Board Members live over
12 there? Are you familiar at all with the area?

13 MS. MENENDEZ: I am.

14 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: I think we're all-- well, I'm
15 familiar with it.

16 MS. GRANDA: So we have a situation--

17 MR. FLANAGAN: I think what we can do is-- or
18 maybe we can ask Staff to direct your concerns about
19 speeding and stop signs to-- maybe that should go to the
20 police department, and then to--

21 MS. GRANDA: I even want speed bumps behind the
22 school, if it's up to me, okay.

23 Now, building is fine, as long as they adhere to
24 the present Code. Density is very important. If you
25 put a building in our neighborhood that is over 100

1 neighborhood. Keep the character that it was intended
2 to.

3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you very much.

4 MS. GRANDA: Thank you.

5 THE SECRETARY: Ana Hernandez.

6 MS. HERNANDEZ: Hello. I don't think I can reach
7 the microphone.

8 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Well, it's adjustable. You
9 can--

10 MS. HERNANDEZ: I can speak loud, too. I live in
11 the North Ponce area, on Alhambra, and I heard Mr. Trias
12 state his presentation. I just want to say that it's
13 very nice, and I'm all for it, except there are some
14 things that I want to bring to your attention today
15 about this.

16 Magda has spoken about traffic. My concerns-- and
17 I come representing 75 persons from four buildings where
18 I live. They couldn't all come here.

19 Okay. Thank you. Before we decorate the house,
20 you know, we should fix the plumbing. That's the only
21 way I can give you an example of how I feel, because
22 right now in the North Ponce area-- in the North Gables
23 area, Code Enforcement seems to be having a problem
24 where we don't have enough Code Enforcement.

25 Mr. Trias talks about all sorts of beautiful

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1 things, but we have people parking in the swales,
 2 parking by the fire hydrants. We have construction
 3 where they don't have the green covering on the fence.
 4 We have garbage all over the place. I call all of the
 5 time about people with motorcycles.
 6 I have never seen any studies done so far yet
 7 about water and sewer. We live in a no-flood area, and
 8 right now if there's a little summer storm, the water
 9 from 16th Street to Navarro, on Douglas Road, goes right
 10 up to the top of the tires on the cars, and I've lived
 11 there all of my life, and I've never seen that happen
 12 before. My water bill went up from \$1,400 to \$2,200,
 13 and without increasing the water usage, so I know. If
 14 you change the density, there's more people. There's
 15 more clogged sewers.
 16 You spoke about Mr. Merrick and his Mediterranean
 17 vision, but there's a building next to me that looks
 18 like a Japanese Pagoda. That doesn't look Mediterranean
 19 at all. These are some issues, that I think, when you
 20 start making decisions about what to do about the area,
 21 you should take into account.
 22 There's an illegal bed and breakfast. I know it's
 23 allowed in the North Gables area, but there that's
 24 illegal. I called Code Enforcement. Nothing's been
 25 done. So, I think, first, we should get Code

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1 Enforcement to start looking at all of those little
 2 things, fix the place up, clean it up, before you start
 3 changing zoning areas from residential to commercial.
 4 Before building all of these beautiful things, and all
 5 of these bicycles paths, and all of this other beautiful
 6 stuff, we should first fix the house up. And I think
 7 that's about all I have to say. Thank you.
 8 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 9 THE SECRETARY: Rita Gross.
 10 MS. GROSS: Hi. Good evening. My name is Rita
 11 Gross. I live at the Minorca, 2030 South Douglas Road.
 12 I have been a resident of Coral Gables for about six
 13 years now, and I attended the workshops that Mr. Trias
 14 was talking about, and I appreciate the opportunity that
 15 it's given us, as residents, to provide the input. So I
 16 salute the City for, you know, providing the workshops.
 17 But, as a citizen, I do have concerns.
 18 My concerns are not about the progress of the
 19 City, because I'd like to see newer things, and I'd like
 20 to see better buildings, right, but my concern is about
 21 the highrises and the high density of the buildings that
 22 are coming up, especially in certain areas.
 23 I live at the entryway of Alhambra, as you know,
 24 where the Minorca building is, and there are several
 25 buildings that residents are against one particular

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1 project, which I won't mention, but there's a particular
 2 project that's going right at the entryway of Alhambra,
 3 okay, the entrance. So we talk about the Douglas
 4 entrance as being Mr. Merrick's entry point, but
 5 Alhambra is also an important point. And as we know,
 6 that's a historic driveway or road, so it's important to
 7 the city.
 8 Right across from the elementary school is a
 9 building that's going up. The Developer is asking for a
 10 Code change, right, from today. So what we attended
 11 yesterday was a meeting where they informed us that
 12 there's going to be approximately 189 Units. They're
 13 asking for mixed-use of that for use, and my concern is,
 14 it's right across the street from an elementary school.
 15 The safety of the children, okay. We're compromising
 16 that for our children.
 17 I live there. I've lived there for over six
 18 years, as I mentioned, and I can see the growth of the
 19 traffic. The parking is horrendous. We have cars on
 20 Minorca, Navarre. We also have Galiano, which if you
 21 measure the street, once you put to cars that parallel
 22 park, you basically have about 19 feet, okay. You add
 23 200 cars on Alhambra, you add another 300 cars that's
 24 going right next to La Palma, you have about 500 cars
 25 that are going to that area.

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1 Now, I think we all know, especially the Planning
 2 and Zoning, that the streets are not designed for this
 3 growth, okay. These streets cannot be expanded, unless
 4 somebody comes up with an idea, which we as residents
 5 are more than welcome to listen to, okay.
 6 Again, we're not-- we're not against it. We would
 7 like to understand what these developers can come in
 8 now, without the zoning change, and what they can do, so
 9 that we can also represent ourselves well when these
 10 items come up to the Planning and Zoning for change,
 11 because we-- we're against the Code changes, because of
 12 the reasons that I mentioned.
 13 I apologize for not having more of my neighbors
 14 come, but, unfortunately, because of time, but I am
 15 representing four buildings; Minorca, Villa Alhambra,
 16 One Alhambra, and also I have a colleague here from
 17 Colonial Villas. So thank you very much for your time.
 18 MS. MENENDEZ: Could I ask her a question?
 19 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes. Your microphone.
 20 MS. MENENDEZ: The building that you mentioned, is
 21 that along Ponce?
 22 MS. GROSS: No, it's right on Alhambra. I'm not
 23 sure if--
 24 MS. MENENDEZ: On Alhambra toward Douglas, the
 25 East?

1 MS. GROSS: No, it's right in the Alhambra
 2 entryway, right on Alhambra.
 3 MS. MENENDEZ: Oh, off of Douglas-- off of the
 4 MS. GROSS: Off--
 5 MS. MENENDEZ: Off 37th Avenue?
 6 MS. GROSS: Douglas, yeah. When you come through
 7 the Alhambra entrance, it's right there.
 8 MS. MENENDEZ: All right. Thank you.
 9 MS. GROSS: Yeah, thank you.
 10 MR. TRIAS: It's 33 Alhambra.
 11 MS. MENENDEZ: 33 Alhambra, thank you.
 12 THE SECRETARY: Rip Holmes.
 13 MR. HOLMES: Thank you. I'm going to speak on a
 14 different item, not this one.
 15 THE SECRETARY: Kenneth Garcia.
 16 MR. GARCIA: Hello. My name is Kenneth Garcia.
 17 I'm a resident and property owner at 20 Alhambra Circle,
 18 Number 8. I attended the meetings that they had
 19 regarding the North Ponce Community Visioning, and I
 20 appreciate the City holding these meetings and listening
 21 to residents.
 22 The major concerns that came up had to do with
 23 development and the scale of development. One of the
 24 best things about this neighborhood is that there's a
 25 lot of small historic apartment buildings. It's very

1 walkable, very bikeable, and it's at a scale that you
 2 really don't have anywhere else in the City.
 3 So I applaud the efforts to try to find ways to
 4 keep that scale the way it is, and encourage new
 5 development at a small scale instead of at a large
 6 scale.
 7 Right now, the Code encourages very large
 8 buildings that are not in keeping with what the
 9 neighborhood currently is at. So regulations that, both
 10 within the neighborhood, supports small scale
 11 development, and then on the corridors, find ways to
 12 transition appropriately down to the neighborhood, are
 13 very important.
 14 Thank you for your time.
 15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 16 THE SECRETARY: No more speakers.
 17 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Thank you, Jill.
 18 MR. WU: Mr. Chair, I would caution the Board when
 19 they talk about specific projects that may come before
 20 you, some of these projects are quasi-judicial in
 21 nature, so you can talk about generalities about North
 22 Ponce, but I would caution you not to talk about
 23 specific projects that might be coming before you.
 24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Right. And I agree.
 25 MS. MENENDEZ: I'm going to focus on the study.

1 MR. WU: Thank you.
 2 MS. MENENDEZ: But thank you for the reminder.
 3 Ramon, on Page 13, you have that top slide that's
 4 called, North Ponce Conservation Overlay. In my
 5 interpretation of looking at this, the hash black line--
 6 within the hash black line, is that what you're looking
 7 to conserve-- you know, to keep? It's Page 13 of your
 8 slides.
 9 In other words, is that the conservation area?
 10 MR. TRIAS: Of this-- Unfortunately I have several
 11 sets.
 12 MS. MENENDEZ: Right here. The one that you gave
 13 us tonight.
 14 MR. TRIAS: Yeah.
 15 MS. MENENDEZ: Is that the conservation area?
 16 MR. TRIAS: The conservation area are the areas
 17 that are not on Ponce De Leon.
 18 MS. MENENDEZ: Right. Is this, in fact-- does
 19 this delineate the conservation areas?
 20 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
 21 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay. And then when you go to the
 22 next slide, on Page 17, which is entitled North Ponce
 23 mixed-use.
 24 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
 25 MS. MENENDEZ: Is it-- one of the things you're

1 exploring, is that specific area being perhaps
 2 considered for mixed-use overlay?
 3 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
 4 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay. But nothing has been drawn
 5 up related to that, you're just exploring it right now?
 6 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
 7 MS. MENENDEZ: So really we're just looking at
 8 conceptual ideas. There's really nothing for us to vote
 9 on, we're just discussing it?
 10 MR. TRIAS: Absolutely. Yeah. And, actually what
 11 I would like is priorities, what kind of things are
 12 important to you, and then we can develop them further,
 13 and then bring them back to you.
 14 And the same thing with the neighbors. That's the
 15 kind of input that we've been looking for.
 16 MS. MENENDEZ: Do you think it makes sense to
 17 create a buffer between this conservation area and this
 18 mixed-use area by virtue of, I don't know, some
 19 easements, you know, where it becomes like a-- kind of
 20 like a barrier or kind of like a buffer?
 21 MR. TRIAS: Yeah. And that's what I showed you in
 22 that section that showed the outline of the buildings.
 23 If you looked at the back, there was a mandatory paseo
 24 and there was also lower scale buildings, as opposed to
 25 the current regulations, which don't have that.

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1 And let me see if I find it.
2 MS. MENENDEZ: You're referring to Number 15 in
3 this sheet here?
4 This sheet here?
5 MR. TRIAS: Unfortunately, my sheet is different.
6 No, it's not 15.
7 MS. MENENDEZ: Do you want my sheet?
8 MR. TRIAS: It's not that one.
9 MS. MENENDEZ: It's not that one.
10 MR. TRIAS: It's this one. This one.
11 MS. MENENDEZ: Oh, okay.
12 MS. TRIAS: Okay. So this one-- if you look at
13 this--
14 MS. MENENDEZ: There's no way to put that up
15 there?
16 MR. TRIAS: Yeah, if we can have the PowerPoint
17 again. Yeah, that's pretty close. Let's see if we can
18 get to that point.
19 Yeah, there you go. Thank you very much.
20 If we look at the lower image, as you can see in
21 the back, on either end, there's a smaller building,
22 that the building comes down, then there's a mandatory
23 paseo. There's some requirements that's-- for example,
24 a liner of the parking, so it's not-- parking garages
25 are not facing smaller buildings.

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1 Those are the kinds of design features that we
2 could incorporate into the Code to make it better as a
3 transition. So that was one topic; how to transition
4 from the large buildings on Ponce De Leon to the
5 Conservation District behind.
6 So our thought was some kind of regulation that
7 shape the massing of the building, that created a
8 reasonable scale in the front, which is one to one.
9 One, meaning the width of Ponce De Leon, and one before
10 you step back in the front. And then toward the back,
11 there's a more substantial step back and then there's a
12 mandatory paseo.
13 Again, ideas for you to consider.
14 MS. MENENDEZ: When you look at that same slide,
15 and you look-- the bottom portion of it does not
16 indicate how high you're going. Am I to assume that
17 it's the same height as the one above?
18 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
19 MS. MENENDEZ? So the maximum height you're
20 looking at is 150? That's what--
21 MR. TRIAS: Plus a bonus when you have a highrise.
22 We're not changing the Land Use or the Zoning, okay.
23 Those are existing. And sometimes-- I realize now, that
24 when we show drawings like this, sometimes they're a
25 little shocking, and they seem large, but that's what

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1 the Code already allows.
2 MS. MENENDEZ: But it would be helpful, though,
3 perhaps in your next presentation, that you indicate
4 that the proposed regulation does not change what
5 they're allowed to do today.
6 MR. TRIAS: Right. That's-- yes, you're right. We
7 could have those numbers right there.
8 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay. That's it for me.
9 MR. TRIAS: Now, if you believe we should change
10 it, feel free to make any recommendations. But our
11 advice, and from our professional point of view, we are
12 not recommending any significant changes in terms of the
13 land use regulations or Zoning. However, we are
14 recommending some specific changes on the development
15 standards. Meaning, the shaping of the buildings.
16 MS. MENENDEZ: The shaping of the building and, I
17 think, you're also trying to create additional buffers--
18 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
19 MS. MENENDEZ: --To the neighborhoods. You know,
20 the lower scale neighborhoods that are adjacent to it.
21 MR. BEHAR: And a transition between the higher
22 density along the corridor, to the lower scale on the
23 residential adjacent to it.
24 MR. TRIAS: Precisely, yes.
25 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Are you recommending a change with

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1 the parking requirements?
2 MR. TRIAS: Well, we-- actually, you have already
3 reviewed, and the Commission has approved the shared
4 parking component that applies to mixed-use buildings.
5 We have also changed some of the requirements for
6 apartments. Meaning, one bedroom apartments require one
7 bedroom-- I mean, one parking space, I'm sorry.
8 Beyond that, what we're also saying is, that in
9 the Conservation District, there should be a parking
10 management process for the residents, because they do
11 have an issue with other people using the parking on the
12 streets. And, frankly, the traffic and the parking
13 issues that have been raised are incredibly important.
14 MS. MENENDEZ: How about residential parking? Has
15 that been explored?
16 MR. TRIAS: Yes. That was one idea that came up.
17 And, in fact, it's already-- I already sent an email to
18 Kevin, our Parking Director, to explore that, because
19 one of the neighborhood groups requested that, but I
20 think that's applicable to all of them.
21 MS. MENENDEZ: Right.
22 MR. TRIAS: And that, in itself, is one simple
23 tool that enhances the quality of life versus the
24 parking and traffic issues, which is incredibly
25 difficult to deal with, but we do have some tools.

1 Now, the other thing is, what I would like to say
2 to people is that traffic is really generated by
3 parking. Large buildings by themselves don't
4 necessarily generate a lot of single vehicle--
5 single-occupant vehicle traffic. However, when you have
6 a lot of parking attached to those buildings, then you
7 have more traffic. So that's why it's so important to
8 find the right balance. Obviously you want to have
9 parking, you need it, but excessive parking is not
10 necessarily a good thing, because it may generate more
11 traffic than you would like.

12 So those are the issues that we're trying to
13 balance, and at the same time, we have a very-- we have
14 a set of streets we're not changing. They're not going
15 to change. So the kind of improvements that we need to
16 focus on are also the trolley, for example, and bicycle
17 and pedestrian improvements, which I think allow for a
18 much higher quality of the pedestrian experience.

19 So those are the things that, with the input from
20 the neighbors, and what we've heard so far, I believe we
21 can make some changes incrementally in the Zoning Code,
22 and then eventually get to the place we want to get.

23 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Anybody else?

24 MR. BEHAR: I-- I'm looking at the diagram that
25 Maria pointed to, the proposed-- the proposed existing

1 regulation proposed. I'm not in favor of seeing the
2 liner go up the whole frontage of the building in this
3 particular case, and taking that pedestal height to
4 eight stories. I think that's going to create a more
5 massive pedestal. I would be in favor of, you know,
6 maybe the first three levels, the ground floor and two
7 above, to have liner unit, because at a pedestrian
8 level, that's what you really appreciate and see. When
9 it's, you know, on the 3rd or 4th, 5th Floor, you know,
10 you really don't. And I think that maybe what you do
11 is, you keep the pedestal to be similar to the Mixed-use
12 District, where you could go up to, I think it's 45

13 MR. TRIAS: 45 feet.

14 MR. BEHAR: 45 feet. Maybe by the different
15 heights, it goes up a little bit more, and then you step
16 it back.

17 MS. MENENDEZ: Yeah, I like that.

18 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Behar, if I could slightly
19 disagree. And the idea is that the proportion here is
20 one to one, which is the proportion of, let's say, the
21 boulevards of Paris, the great streets of Barcelona.
22 They tend to be one to one, and if we have high quality
23 activity along that whole frontage, you end up with that
24 high quality boulevard. I mean, that was the thinking.

25 Now, there may be better ways to actually

1 implement it, but I would not discount that idea. The
2 idea is that the proportion, as long as it doesn't sit
3 one to one, it's not bad. It's not bad.

4 MR. BEHAR: From the development perspective--

5 MR. TRIAS: Yes. Yes.

6 MR. BEHAR: Something like this makes it a little
7 bit more difficult, and what it does, Mr. Trias, by
8 putting the liner in the front and the liner in the
9 back, now you're forcing the parking to go up higher.

10 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

11 MR. BEHAR: Okay. And I think that, in return, we
12 get a more massive pedestal. The whole idea of trying
13 to do a mixed-use shared parking is to keep that
14 pedestal to be lower. I think for the maybe two, three
15 levels, I think it's-- that's correct. But I think that
16 the whole frontage eight stories-- I think it may be too
17 much. I think, again, as a habitable space where there
18 is ground floor retail, second floor liner units,
19 residential units, which would provide good eyes on the
20 streets, and it's typical to the European cities where
21 you have people living right off, it's good, but I don't
22 know if I would be in favor of supporting eight stories,
23 because then my pedestal grows that much.

24 MR. TRIAS: That's a very good point, because if
25 you look at the section, the pedestal has actually

1 grown, and you're right, that's one of the issues.
2 We'll look at it more closely.

3 I think that with the additional component of the
4 shared parking, maybe-- maybe we can find a better
5 solution.

6 MR. BEHAR: I like the transition in the back, and
7 maybe, you know, when you're abutting the conservation
8 area, you know, you have a transition and you have
9 habitable space, residential units, so you're not
10 looking into the parking garage at all of the levels.

11 MR. TRIAS: Right.

12 MR. BEHAR: But I think you need to do-- I would
13 hate to see an eight-story all of the way through on
14 Ponce, and-- because of it dictating that this is
15 forcing them.

16 MR. TRIAS: Very good point. Very good point.

17 MR. BEHAR: That's all. That's all of my
18 comments.

19 MR. FLANAGAN: And I would just add, I think the
20 liner in the back is good. I just wonder if it's not
21 going too far into each block. It looks like the
22 mixed-use overlay would end up seemingly taking, again,
23 some of the shorter-- on the shorter blocks, almost half
24 of the block, not quite half the block. I mean, I
25 understand the concept of why. It's in order to provide

1 for that liner, but I guess I would just put out there
2 that--

3 MR. TRIAS: And that's one of the big policy
4 decisions, how deep should that overlay be. And I think
5 we'll look at it more closely, in terms of architecture,
6 and see if we can have some examples that illustrate it
7 better, but I think the two issues, how deep it goes
8 into the block, and how high that pedestal goes into the
9 sky.

10 MR. GRABIEL: If I may, I love that neighborhood.
11 I-- actually, going back, when I first moved to Coral
12 Gables, we lived in the corner of Galiano and Mendoza,
13 so my first view--

14 MS. MENENDEZ: Experience.

15 MR. GRABIEL: --Experience of the United States in
16 Coral Gables was Galiano and Mendoza. And then for over
17 40 years, I worked at the Douglas entrance, so I would
18 traverse that neighborhood day, after day, after day,
19 and I love it. I think it's one of the jewels of the
20 City, and we should do everything to maintain the
21 character and the fabric of that neighborhood, and I
22 don't think there's a single solution. And I think the
23 right approach, we've been talking about it, is
24 landscaping, it's controlled parking, it's looking at
25 the scale, it's looking at newer regulations, maybe even

1 as we did closer to Downtown, where certain buildings
2 may not require parking. I think that's something we
3 might want to investigate. As long as the City provides
4 public parking, we could do that. And I think that
5 might be part of a solution.

6 It's also one of the few areas of the City that
7 still has affordable housing. I know a lot of people
8 who live there, who if they had to move, they could not
9 afford to live in Coral Gables anymore. And I think we
10 should do everything that's possible to preserve the
11 existing buildings, the historic buildings, which are
12 there, which are part of the character of the
13 neighborhood, and at the same time try to provide
14 additional benefits to the older buildings, so that they
15 can still maintain the residential character.

16 I don't think we are talking about-- some of the
17 residents talked about converting residential areas into
18 commercial. I don't think anybody is talking about
19 that. I think we are all looking at maintaining the
20 residential still purely residential. It's just trying
21 to maintain-- and I think it's multiple venues. I think
22 you need to look at parking. You need to look at the
23 scale. You need to maybe look at the situation with the
24 existing buildings that have no parking. How do we
25 solve that area, open space, and just one thing at a

1 time.

2 You know, it's a great neighborhood. The trolley
3 is tremendous. I think it attracts people who can live
4 anywhere in the City, who don't need to have two cars or
5 even a car, because they can take the trolley to
6 Downtown Coral Gables, and then to the Metrorail, and
7 work anywhere in the City. So we should look at it, not
8 solely as the neighborhood, as really part of a City
9 that can really add to the quality of living of the
10 City.

11 MR. TRIAS: Very good.

12 MR. GRABIEL: I'm sorry, I forgot one more thing.
13 I respectfully disagree with your statement. I think
14 when you drive on Ponce, and you look at those buildings
15 with those parking garages that go from the 2nd Floor
16 all of the way to the 8th Floor, they are atrocious, and
17 I think the idea-- I don't think we need the liner in
18 the back, you know, if that's not acquired, but if we
19 can create a street on Ponce, where we have pedestrian--
20 people activity, looking at all of the floors that look
21 on Ponce, the quality of that street will improve
22 tremendously.

23 MR. BEHAR: You much rather have an eight-story
24 building fronting Ponce than a five-story building where
25 the first three floors is habitable, the last two floors

1 is not, and give you like a five-story volume on the
2 street versus an eight-story?

3 MR. GRABIEL: I love the idea of the liner going
4 all of the way to the top. I don't know if it's
5 feasible. I don't know if we can work it into a
6 commercial development, but if we could do that, I think
7 that the quality of the street would improve
8 tremendously.

9 MR. FLANAGAN: All right.

10 MR. TRIAS: As long as Robert designs the
11 building, it's okay.

12 MR. BEHAR: Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Anybody else? Are we good for
14 now?

15 MR. BELLIN: Yeah. No, I've got some
16 clarifications and questions. Let's start with the
17 Locally Designated Historic Buildings.

18 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

19 MR. BELLIS: All of these conditions apply only to
20 Designated Historic Buildings. If it's not designated,
21 Historic, these don't apply?

22 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

23 MR. BELLIN: Okay. The Pre-1964 Buildings, Staff
24 Review of Modifications, I'd like it spelled out who the
25 Staff is going to be, what department, so we know who we

1 really have to deal with.
 2 Okay. Small Building Modifications, Building
 3 Site-- Maximum Building Site 20,000 Square Feet.
 4 Then the next line is: Building Square Footage,
 5 Maximum Building Square Footage, 7,500 Square Feet.
 6 What does that mean? You got a 20,000 square foot
 7 lot, you can only put--
 8 MR. TRIAS: Well-- yeah, that's to be consistent
 9 with the Code that over 20,000 square feet is the larger
 10 buildings. So we're trying to see if we can do
 11 something for the less than 20,000 square feet parcels.
 12 MR. BELLIN: But what this says is that the
 13 maximum building square footage can be 7,500 square
 14 feet.
 15 MR. TRIAS: For the benefit of the small
 16 buildings. If you don't want to take advantage of that,
 17 certainly you can follow whatever is allowed by the Code
 18 right now. So those are the two options.
 19 MR. BELLIN: Okay. The building heights for small
 20 buildings in that area now is six stories or 70 feet.
 21 What you're proposing is 45 feet and three stories.
 22 MR. TRIAS: For the small buildings.
 23 MR. BELLIN: Yeah, but it's-- it doesn't really
 24 matter, the Zoning is what it is.
 25 MR. TRIAS: Right, but the Zoning is what it is,

1 in this particular area, an issue of dispute in some
 2 cases, because it has specific inconsistencies with the
 3 current plan, so we need to make sure we clarify all of
 4 that, so we mean what we say in the Zoning Code very
 5 clearly, and it's consistent with the Comp Plan. So
 6 those are the things that we need to work on.
 7 I think that the more use-- the best use of our
 8 time right now probably is to make suggestions about
 9 what should be done and how to do it better.
 10 MR. BELLIN: I'm just really asking questions,
 11 so--
 12 MR. TRIAS: Yeah. And the thing is that this
 13 outline is not meant to be a proposal. It's just an
 14 outline for discussion.
 15 MR. BELLIN: The Parking Relief Program.
 16 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
 17 MR. BELLIN: If you can pay into a fund?
 18 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
 19 MR. BELLIN: So that means you do a building, and
 20 you pay into the fund, then you don't have to provide
 21 parking at all?
 22 MR. TRIAS: Not necessarily, at all. It could be
 23 some of the parking. Some of the parking could be
 24 paid--
 25 MR. BELLIN: So, there would be a cap on the

1 percentage that would be allowed?
 2 MR. TRIAS: Yes. I mean, we could come up with a
 3 percentage if you want to.
 4 Mr. BELLIN: Okay. Driveways, maximum one
 5 driveway shall be permitted for every 100 street
 6 frontage.
 7 What if we have two 50-foot lots, different
 8 owners, they both need to provide parking for their
 9 buildings.
 10 MR. TRIAS: Well, they could share a driveway.
 11 MR. BELLIN: I think that's a little complicated.
 12 MR. TRIAS: Yeah, I know.
 13 The main issue is that one of the things that is
 14 being encouraged is to preserve the green in the front.
 15 So, clearly, if you have parking or if you
 16 have--which is not allowed-- but if you had driveways--
 17 and in some of the older buildings, we do have parking
 18 that interferes with the aesthetic of the green, of the
 19 street. So we're trying to figure out a way to do it
 20 right. But that's a good point. We may need some
 21 flexibility on that.
 22 MR. BELLIN: Okay. All parking areas shall be
 23 buffered from the street behind a minimum of 20-foot
 24 depth of habitable living space on all levels.
 25 MR. TRIAS: Right.

1 MR. BELLIN: What do you put in a 20-foot
 2 habitable space?
 3 MR. TRIAS: Well, that's a minimum. Clearly, you,
 4 as an Architect, can design something that makes sense
 5 to you, but it would probably be residential, I would
 6 think, as an MF-2.
 7 MR. BELLIN: Well, it's a depth of 20 feet, so it
 8 it's a little difficult. But, I mean, what kind of
 9 uses--
 10 MR. TRIAS: It could be more. I mean, the depth
 11 is the minimum.
 12 MR. BELLIN: Yeah, but on a 100-foot lot, you
 13 start to get to the point where you can't provide the
 14 parking anymore.
 15 But residential uses, lobbies, count toward that;
 16 mail rooms. I mean, those kind of things can be used.
 17 MR. TRIAS: I think they should. I think they
 18 should.
 19 MR. BELLIN: Okay. As far as the boundaries, the
 20 way the boundaries are selected, what happens if you
 21 have a piece of property, one owner, and his property
 22 extends from one use to the next? Meaning, if-- let's
 23 say it's on Ponce, and you have a C-Zone, and then an
 24 MF-2 contiguous to it, and it's owned by one person?
 25 What really happens when you've developed the property?

1 MR. TRIAS: Well, keep in mind that the process of
2 amending the Zoning Code and the Maps still exists. If
3 there's a case in which there has to be an amendment
4 because of a particular design or configuration, there's
5 a process for that.

6 So what we're proposing here is a reasonable
7 boundary. We need to test it further, but in the
8 future, I believe that the Commission would have the
9 authority to make amendments.

10 MR. BELLIN: Okay. I think it'd be helpful if we
11 really understood who owned the properties, and-- you
12 know, we're working on a property, and it's that exact
13 situation, where you've got a C-Zone, and it falls in
14 the Overlay District, and also part of it would fall in
15 the Conservation District, so what happens?

16 MR. TRIAS: At that point, you're welcome to
17 propose a change of language or change of Zoning or
18 change the Overlay Boundary, if that were the case, and
19 then it would be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning and
20 the Commission.

21 MR. BELLIN: All right. So you'd have to go back
22 and get a Land-use change for the piece that's in the
23 MF2 or--

24 MR. TRIAS: I mean, certainly we haven't adopted
25 anything, so we're still in the discussion stage. If

1 there's some idea that could make it better, certainly
2 you can propose it.

3 MR. BELLIN: Okay. Well, again, with respect to
4 the liners--

5 MR. FLANAGAN: Marshall, on the microphone,
6 please.

7 MR. BELLIN: With respect to the liners, figuring
8 out the parking calculations, what you're suggesting is
9 a uniform parking measure of one space per 300 square
10 feet?

11 MR. TRIAS: For the Ground Level, yeah.

12 MR. BELLIN: For the Ground Level, for any use?

13 MR. TRIAS: Yes.

14 MR. BELLIN: So if I have a 1,000 square foot, two
15 bedroom apartment, I've got to provide four parking
16 spaces?

17 MR. TRIAS: For the mixed-use, when you have
18 commercial uses downstairs.

19 MR. BELLIN: But it says, for all uses. So if
20 it's a residential use--

21 MR. TRIAS: No, but it doesn't apply-- it would
22 apply to the Overlay-- to the Mixed-use Overlay.

23 MR. BELLIN: Okay.

24 MR. TRIAS: I mean, that uniform parking, that's
25 designed for Mixed-use buildings.

1 Mr. BELLIN: Okay. You don't have to provide
2 parking for the square footage that comprises the
3 residential or the commercial, the liner, that's what
4 you're suggesting, that you don't have to provide
5 parking for the liner?

6 MR. TRIAS: Well, that's just one idea to
7 encourage that liner. It's a choice. Obviously, the
8 minimum parking requirements, and then a developer may
9 provide additional parking if they believe that's
10 necessary.

11 MR. BELLIN: Well, what I'm saying is that if you
12 provide liners on all eight stories, and you don't have
13 to provide parking for that use, I mean, it could
14 comprise 20 percent of the building.

15 MR. TRIAS: Yeah. And then the parking garage is
16 not as tall as Mr. Behar thought it would be.

17 MR. BELLIN: But then it gets higher.

18 MR. TRIAS: And that has to be balanced with the
19 fact, is it marketable, is it something that makes
20 sense, and so, and so?

21 Those are the opportunities that we have to
22 incentivise the type of form, the type of building that
23 is best for the City.

24 MR. BELLIN: Okay. And basically it was just
25 questions and verifications.

1 MR. TRIAS: Very good ones.

2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: All right. Thank you. I look
3 forward to seeing some more of that in the future.

4 Thank you, Ramon.

5 MR. TRIAS: All right. We'll be back with some
6 specific amendments.

7 Thank you very much.

8 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. We'll move on to the
9 agenda. In order, Items 5, 6 and 7 are related. It's
10 the Villa Valencia Project. Let me ask Charles or to
11 Craig Collier, do we need-- are we reading in all five
12 of these? I don't think-- if my understanding-- based
13 on the packet I received, we're not hearing anything
14 substantive on this. I believe it's more of a
15 discussion item. So, procedurally, I'm not sure how we
16 should best proceed.

17 MR. COLLIER: I think we should read them in.

18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay.

19 MR. COLLIER: Because we're going to have part of
20 this as a public hearing, so I would read them in.

21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. So I'll read them--I'll
22 read all three of them in, and then we'll dispose of
23 them individually once we get to that point.

24 Item Number 5 is an Ordinance of the City
25 Commission of the City of Coral Gables, Florida

1 requesting an amendment to the text of the City of Coral
 2 Gables Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Element,
 3 Policy FLU-1.1.2, "Table FLU-1, Residential Land Uses",
 4 pursuant to expedited state review procedures, Statute
 5 163.3184, Florida Statutes, and Zoning Code Article 3,
 6 "Development Review" Division 15 "Comprehensive Plan
 7 Text and Map Amendments," amending the "residential
 8 Multi-Family Medium Density" Land use Classifications to
 9 provide a maximum 100 units per acre density and a
 10 maximum 120' height towers for projects developed in
 11 accordance with the Mediterranean Design Transitional
 12 Overlay District Zoning Code Regulations; providing for
 13 a repealer provision, providing for a severability
 14 clause, providing for an effective date. It's Local
 15 Planning Agency Review. This item was continued from
 16 the April 13, 2016 Planning and Zoning Board Meeting.
 17 Item 6, an Ordinance of the City Commission of
 18 Coral Gables, Florida providing for text amendments to
 19 the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, by
 20 amending Article 4, "Zoning Districts," Section 4-104,
 21 "Multi-Family Special Area District" to allow for a
 22 "Mediterranean Design Transitional Overlay District"
 23 Conditional Use with form-based development standards
 24 that modify and supplement the existing Multi-Family
 25 Special Area District standards and criteria to allow

1 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Good evening, Mr. Chair,
 2 Members of the Board. Mario Garcia-Serra with offices
 3 at 600 Brickell Avenue. I do not believe that Staff has
 4 any particular presentation for this item, so I'll just
 5 proceed with the presentation that I have.
 6 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 7 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: It is-- essentially really
 8 we're going to be giving you some history of how we've
 9 gotten to the point where we are right now. I'll tell
 10 you what we've been up to in the last few meetings as
 11 we've been continuing this item in our discussion with
 12 the neighbors, and ask you for guidance as to what you
 13 think we should do.
 14 We've made progress. I can't say that absolutely
 15 everybody who's been involved in the process is 100
 16 percent in agreement now with what the proposed design
 17 will be, but I do think we've gotten additional support
 18 and buy-in from some of the changes that we've made to
 19 the plan as we've been discussing with the neighbors.
 20 What we need here this evening is your guidance in
 21 deciding how to proceed, because some of the things that
 22 we are changing to the design in response to the
 23 neighbors aren't exactly consistent with the very last
 24 direction and recommendation that this Board gave us
 25 back in January. So we'll go through sort of the

1 appropriate infill and redevelopment in transition areas
 2 between lower density residential development and high
 3 intensity commercial and residential development if
 4 certain minimum requirements are met; providing for a
 5 repealer provision, providing for a severability clause,
 6 codification, and providing for an effective date. This
 7 item was continued from the April 13, 2016 Planning and
 8 Zoning Board Meeting.
 9 Item 7 is a Resolution of the City Commission of
 10 Coral Gables, Florida requesting Conditional Use Site
 11 Plan Review pursuant to Article-- pursuant to Zoning
 12 Code Article 3, "Development Review", Division 4,
 13 "Conditional Uses", Article 4, "Zoning Districts",
 14 Division 4, "Multi-Family Special Area District",
 15 Section 4-104.C, "Conditional Uses", and Appendix D,
 16 "Mediterranean Design Transitional Overlay District" for
 17 the proposed project referred to as "Villa Valencia" on
 18 the property legally described as Lots 24-38, Block 7,
 19 Biltmore Section known as 501-525 Valencia Avenue, Coral
 20 Gables, Florida; including required conditions;
 21 providing for a repealer provision, providing for a
 22 severability clause, and providing for an effective
 23 date. This item was continued from the April 13, 2016
 24 Planning and Zoning Board meeting.
 25 Who wants to go first? Mario.

1 initial information of what designs have previously come
 2 before you, and where we are now, so if we could--
 3 I think everybody is familiar where the site is,
 4 Northwest corner of the intersection of Hernando and
 5 Valencia Avenue. It's a one acre site. Existing right
 6 now are three two-story apartment buildings, which are
 7 not historic in any way, 34 apartment units, no parking,
 8 and approximately an acre in size; just to the North we
 9 have the 550 Biltmore Way Office Building, with the
 10 lions out front-- the sculptures of lions; to the east,
 11 we have the Barack Condominium; to the west, two other
 12 apartment buildings; further to the west, the Biltmore
 13 Two Condominium Building, and then on the south side of
 14 Valencia, apartment buildings and the relatively new
 15 Valencia Townhome Buildings.
 16 This is the design that we brought to you in
 17 September of 2015. That was the design that we
 18 presented in September of 2015. It was calling for 103
 19 residential units, 12 stories, 120 feet in height, with
 20 an FAR of 3.0.
 21 At that point in time, there was little public
 22 discussion, maybe about four speakers in total, two in
 23 support, two expressing objections. The Board had some
 24 design related comments about this plan, which we
 25 incorporated, and then we brought back a revised version

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1 to the Board in January of 2016.

2 At the January 2016 meeting, we then had the

3 involvement of a considerable number of members of the

4 public, including, in particular, from the Valencia

5 Grande Condominium to the west. They were represented

6 by counsel at that meeting, and they expressed several

7 objections and concerns.

8 The Board discussed the project, and we then went

9 back-- made some suggested recommendations, directions

10 as to what to do with the plan. We then went back and

11 incorporated them. We incorporated them into this

12 design, which we have circulated to City Staff for their

13 review and comment, but it has never actually been

14 brought before the Board.

15 That Proposal there that you see in front of you,

16 as directed by this Board back in January, reduced the

17 FAR of the project from 3.0 to 2.5, so that is a 2.5 FAR

18 building that you're seeing there. We also incorporated

19 a pocket park in the corner of the property, on the

20 corner of Valencia and Hernando, about 3,000 square feet

21 in size, and 34 feet in width. Those two changes

22 reducing the FAR, putting the pocket park also reduced

23 the total density of the building from 103 units to 90

24 units. So at the end of January 2016, we had developed

25 this plan, 2.5 FAR, 90 units, and with the park in the

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1 corner of the property.

2 On the Site Plan on the extreme right, you can see

3 the park, which would be the first 34 feet of depth from

4 Hernando Street. You'll notice also those spaces along

5 the parking garage, which were product actually of your

6 previous comments back in September to line the parking

7 garage with some usable space.

8 That is an image of where the park would be

9 located, approximately over 3000 square feet in size,

10 about 34 feet in depth. Right now-- at that point in

11 time, I only proposed sort of a passive park. There has

12 been discussion with the neighbors that we've had

13 recently. They're anxious and looking for a dog park,

14 so that could potentially be converted to a dog park,

15 but you'll see where we incorporated the dog park in a

16 now third design in response to the meetings that we've

17 with the neighbors.

18 To sort of give you an idea of how long this

19 process has been, who we've talked to, and how we've

20 tried to achieve consensus from City, neighbors and

21 Staff, we've prepared this timeline. I will spare

22 everybody of going through line by line, but we'll at

23 least summarize it.

24 My client acquired the property in March of 2012,

25 and between March of 2012 and March of 2014, it was

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1 pretty much two years of discussions with City Staff

2 about what would be the appropriate design and sort of

3 the appropriate Zoning approvals for the project, and

4 went through four different iterations of type of

5 design, before we settled on the one that came before

6 you in September of 2015.

7 Following that, in the Summer of 2014, we met with

8 the Biltmore Neighborhood Association or the Leadership

9 of the Biltmore Association, and in response to some

10 changes that we made to the proposed legislation, we

11 were able to get them to agree to not object to the

12 project.

13 In the Summer of 2014, we also went before the

14 Board of Architects and Development Review Committee,

15 received their comments, incorporated some significant

16 comments, in particular from the Board of Architects,

17 which pushed the parking garage further back from what

18 it was previously, and created more of a green space in

19 front of that design that you saw-- the first design

20 that this Board saw.

21 Then fast-forward to March and April of 2015, we

22 had two different separate neighborhood meetings

23 inviting everybody with notice within 1,000 feet of the

24 property.

25 At those meetings, we had some additional

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1 comments, which lead to things such as getting a

2 Residential Parking Zone approved on the 500 Block of

3 Valencia Avenue, in response to the Valencia Townhomes

4 and what they were requesting, and some other sort of

5 adjustments to the parking garage in particular; all

6 comments that we were able to incorporate, and from

7 those sort of discussions is where we had at least a

8 significant number of neighbors who were supportive, and

9 have been the ones that have spoken in support of the

10 project as it's moved through the process.

11 In July of 2015, we also-- after those two

12 neighborhood meetings, had a separate meeting with the

13 Biltmore Two Condominium Association, and at their

14 request, made the presentation there. Also received

15 comments from them at that meeting.

16 That's then what brings us to September of 2015,

17 first presentation before this Board. You already saw

18 the design.

19 We then came back in January with some revisions

20 in response to your comments in September, and then

21 there were also additional objections from some members

22 of the public at that point in time.

23 So at that point in time is when we started

24 continuing the hearing so as to meet with the neighbors.

25 In between late January and late April of this year,

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1 we've had several small group meetings with two sort of
 2 different groups. There's the group of single-family
 3 homeowners mostly that live to the south of the project,
 4 and then there's the group of sort of townhome and
 5 condominium owners that are more to the west of the
 6 project. In particular, we met with the New French
 7 Village Association there at the New French Village. We
 8 also, not with the Association, but with the Counsel to
 9 the Valencia Grande Building to try to address their
 10 concerns. So that is sort of the history of meetings
 11 and input that we've received up until now.

12 The next few slides are really just there for you
 13 to see the multiple sign-in sheets that we had. Any
 14 meeting that we had more of three or four people, we
 15 asked them to do a sign-in sheet. So here you'll see
 16 the numerous sign-in sheets that we had at all of these
 17 different meetings, and the input that we had from
 18 different neighbors.

19 That brings us now to our latest design. And so
 20 the two biggest objections that we probably heard from
 21 the neighborhood groups that were objecting and with who
 22 we met with, number one, and this was particular
 23 probably the top priority for the group of single-family
 24 homeowners to the south, was height. In other words,
 25 they felt that the current design was too tall, too

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1 high. They didn't want that size of a building facing
 2 their neighborhood there to the south. So in response
 3 to that, we essentially made a building that is somewhat
 4 tall and skinny, shorter and fatter, for lack of a
 5 better way of describing it. And what you have before
 6 you in that elevation that you're looking at is an
 7 eight-story building, at approximately 82 feet in
 8 height. So the height was brought down from 120 feet to
 9 82 feet, from 12 stories to eight stories. The unit
 10 count stays very close to what it was before. Instead
 11 of 103, it's now 102. The corner park is not there
 12 anymore, but we have moved the sort of public space to
 13 fronting Valencia, and it's sort of a dog space that is
 14 partially covered by an arcade, and partially open with
 15 grass area for dogs, and so forth, to be able to run
 16 around in there.

17 I'll ask Hamed, the Project Architect, to go into
 18 a little bit more detail through the revised proposed
 19 design so you have an idea of what we were doing, and
 20 why we were doing it.

21 Traffic, you know, that was probably the biggest
 22 issue of the neighbors to the west, and an issue of
 23 everybody. And what came through in that discussion,
 24 clearly, is that the existing situation is bad.
 25 Regardless of what we do on our Site, whether we

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1 demolish the building, and just put landscaping there or
 2 whether we build a highrise, it is a-- already, for
 3 them, a bad situation, in particular, in the morning and
 4 evening rush hours. I don't hear complaints about
 5 during other times during the day, but during the rush
 6 hours, apparently there's a lot of stacking and so forth
 7 at the different lights.

8 What we're proposing to do there, and I'll discuss
 9 it with you after we have the architectural discussion,
 10 are several offsite traffic improvements to try to
 11 address the traffic, because quite often, you know, they
 12 might-- you know, quite often the objections would come
 13 in the term of density, but then you really ask them
 14 what's your concern behind this issue of density, and it
 15 would inevitably end up being a traffic discussion. If
 16 we were to obligate all of our residents to ride
 17 bicycles, you know, density would probably be less of an
 18 issue. What the issue is, is a perceived connection
 19 between density and an increase in traffic.

20 Lastly, this is a proposed rental development.
 21 The Government doesn't have any jurisdiction behind
 22 whether we can have it as a condominium or rental
 23 development. There was some uneasiness among some
 24 neighbors about, hey, what's the rental development
 25 going to entail, and, you know, what sort of quality of

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1 a rental unit are we going to have, and how is it going
 2 to be operated. I think, to a great extent, my client,
 3 based on history of operating rentals and how he runs
 4 his rental properties, has sort of assured-- given some
 5 reassurance on that issue. There's also some design
 6 things that we did to try to address that rental issue.

7 With that said, I'll ask Hamed to maybe just go
 8 through the elevations of each of the eight-story
 9 proposal, so you have a better idea of what we're
 10 looking at.

11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Good evening. Hamed Rodriguez,
 12 Project Architect, 3250 Mary Street.

13 This project has been reduced to eight stories.
 14 It's two stories of public space, amenities for the
 15 building, and half of the west side is parking. The 2nd
 16 Floor is entirely as parking, so we were able to reduce
 17 the six and five-story podium that we had of parking in
 18 the previous designs down to two stories.

19 Furthermore, there is a buffer of 16 feet of
 20 gallery space on the west side of the entry to buffer
 21 the parking even further. And on the east side of the
 22 entry, there is another buffer right where the amenity
 23 levels are.

24 Immediately after the two stories, we have eight
 25 identical stories of units of the, eight one bedrooms,

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1 eight two bedrooms, and one three bedroom per floor, and
 2 those are large units. Those are in the 850 range for
 3 the one bedrooms, 12,000 for the two bedrooms, and 13--
 4 I'm sorry, 1,200 for the two bedrooms, and 13 for the
 5 three bedrooms.

6 To the rear facade, it's very much like the front
 7 of Valencia. We have some back of house areas there.
 8 We could try to organize it as neatly as possible. We
 9 have an entry that-- or an exit that actually goes
 10 through and utilizes the alley, as we did before.

11 The elevation there to the left would be the
 12 Hernando elevation, so that way we try to fit in and be
 13 contextual with the project, the newer projects across
 14 the street. And, again, we're trying to transition with
 15 the height.

16 The other elevation here, we set the building back
 17 approximately a little over five feet, so that we can
 18 get some penetration on that podium, and not have a
 19 blank wall. We could also have some landscaping on that
 20 side, as well. This building is set back-- as you can
 21 see here on these elevations, the building is set back
 22 on the podium, north/south, east and west.

23 On the west side, it's set back considerably,
 24 because that's where the sunlight is, and that's where
 25 the pool would be.

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1 Here you can see the larger area here on-- the
 2 Colonnade is much deeper on the west side of the
 3 driveway. You can see the landscape area there. And on
 4 the other side, you would see the use, which we have the
 5 gym and management office and a public area for multiple
 6 uses within. Lobby's right in the center, so it's
 7 taking some of the programming from the previous design.

8 Here you can see that we have a covered area and
 9 an uncovered area, and that is something that was
 10 brought as interest from the community, is to have an
 11 area for people to be able to take their dogs. This
 12 would be a very low fenced area there with the gate, so
 13 that people can use that for public benefit. So we
 14 tried to create as much green space around the building
 15 as possible, but this is the one area that's the
 16 deepest, and you can see how we are concealing the
 17 parking. This is parking on surface-- immediate
 18 parking, and then we have a low sloped ramp working its
 19 way up to the next level.

20 The next level is just a parking deck completely
 21 for the balance of the parking, only two levels.

22 Any questions?

23 That discussion, the architectural discussion, to
 24 a great extent, is how we're trying to address the
 25 height issue.

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1 The other issue that I mentioned earlier was
 2 traffic. And traffic is, you know, a challenging issue,
 3 because the existing situation, which is so frustrating
 4 to everybody, including the neighbors involved here, is
 5 not really a product so much of the residents that live
 6 around there or the development that's around there
 7 right now. It's a product of the fact that Coral Gables
 8 is strategically located right in the middle of
 9 Miami-Dade County, and we have a lot people who live
 10 west of Coral Gables, and either work in Coral Gables or
 11 work east of Coral Gables, so all of that population is
 12 commuting through Coral Gables at some point in time
 13 during the day to get to work or to get back home.

14 If you look at our actual project, and you look at
 15 the traffic studies, you look at the concurrency
 16 analysis, the actual increase in trips was not enough to
 17 trip any concurrency requirement or, you know, in any
 18 way violated any of the concurrency rules of the City.
 19 So if you look at the City's Zone rules, we weren't
 20 tripping or going across any threshold that we're not
 21 suppose to be going across.

22 What happens-- the frustration that we hear out
 23 there is because of the existing situation. And some
 24 neighbors then have sort of the perceived-- the
 25 perception that any increase in density, whether it's

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1 even one unit, is going to worsen our situation and, you
 2 know, we should try to fight against it as much as
 3 possible.

4 In reality, the bigger problem, what we really
 5 need to do is to try to manage all of that traffic
 6 that's coming through our City every day from other
 7 sources, and from other places. And so in connection
 8 with that, while realizing that our impact may not be
 9 very significant traffic wise, we're coming into an
 10 existing situation that has its challenges, and we're
 11 asking for certain Zoning approvals, and so we do think
 12 it's justified and appropriate for us to do more than,
 13 "would be our share" in order to try to address the
 14 traffic situation; to try-- in some way, to try to make
 15 it better than what it is right now.

16 The first thing that we're proposing, and we can
 17 go into more details to the extent that you want to, but
 18 this is a summary of pedestrian improvements. It is
 19 somewhat of a challenging situation, particularly
 20 crossing Le Jeune and Biltmore Way, and those major
 21 thoroughfares, and so what we are doing is proposing
 22 approximately somewhere between 80 and \$100,000 worth of
 23 pedestrian improvements. Things such as new pedestrian
 24 crossing signals that give priority to the pedestrian
 25 than the traffic, improving lighting of traffic circles

1 that are in certain areas, so that they're more
2 prominent, and the cars can actually slow down and go
3 around them at the appropriate time, re-doing
4 crosswalks, putting in crosswalks where there aren't any
5 right now, certain turn-- certain turn, painting marks
6 on the street, some are incorrect, correcting those.

7 Like I said, we have our traffic engineer here,
8 and we can go into greater detail on that, but that is
9 one of the things that we're proposing to do to try and
10 address the "traffic issue" and trying to make it easier
11 for pedestrians to get around without necessarily having
12 to rely on a car if you're living in the neighborhood.

13 Another idea is finding ways to slow down and
14 control this cut through traffic that is going through
15 the neighborhood, and what you see up there is not
16 exactly how it's going to look, of course, but the idea
17 would be to put a median in the 500 and 600 Blocks of
18 Valencia, along with some landscape bulb-outs, so as to
19 narrow the path of travel, so that cars will have to
20 slow down as they're driving through there right now.

21 Valencia is a very wide right of way, and that
22 leads sort of to people hitting the accelerator to get
23 from light to light or from stop sign to stop sign. So
24 that would be one idea. This idea was, I'd say, very
25 well received across the board from neighbors, as far as

1 being able to find a way to slow down, better control
2 traffic.

3 Again, rough sort of typical detail of what the
4 idea is. You know, the median, with planting in the
5 middle, along with the landscape bulb-outs to decrease
6 the width of the travel lane.

7 This detail is of traffic diverters, which is
8 something that we mentioned out there to put on Salcedo,
9 because it perhaps would restrict movement into the
10 residential neighborhood, specifically from Salcedo to
11 the side streets.

12 That one is there as detail to show what could
13 possibly be done. It was a mixed review as far as how
14 the neighbors received it. Some liked the idea. Other
15 sort of felt that, hey, that might block my way back
16 home, or whatever it might be, because this is a right
17 in, right out situation, and, you know, some of them
18 might have to do left turns in and out.

19 The last point, which we don't have a slide on,
20 but was the issue of rentals. Again, my client's family
21 has been in the rental business now many generations.
22 They run a tight ship as far as the rental properties
23 are concerned. They keep them in very good shape. They
24 do rigorous background checks. They require, for
25 example, whoever is signing the lease, also has to be

1 guaranteeing the lease. So it's going to be a situation
2 where you just can't have some young student, perhaps,
3 that mom and dad are paying the rent, but are not
4 actually living there, being able to enter into a lease
5 and live there.

6 They also did things, such as, on the balconies,
7 on that new design, trying to make them less
8 transparent, in response to one neighbor's concern about
9 how transparent those balconies could potentially be,
10 and that shows you sort of an example, I think, of good
11 faith on my client's part to go the extra step to, even
12 the concern of one resident, try to address it to try to
13 get somewhere to a point of consensus.

14 Considering all of this discussion, what we're
15 asking from you tonight is to tell us what direction you
16 think we should go in in order to achieve a better
17 consensus. We have your comments from January. We
18 tried to incorporate them. If you'll notice, that
19 building does not look the same as the building we've
20 created in response to neighbor comments. Give us your
21 thoughts, your ideas, as to what you think is the right
22 direction to go in or if we're going in the right
23 direction right now

24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
25 Mr. Trias.

1 MR. TRIAS: Chairman, if I could clarify, although
2 I really appreciate Mr. Garcia's conviction and passion,
3 and the fact that he's asking for your ideas, this is a
4 project that has not been submitted, has not been
5 reviewed. It didn't go before the Board of Architects,
6 and absolutely nothing has taken place in terms of Staff
7 review, and frankly the way that it has changed, which
8 basically it is a box, requesting twice the density that
9 is allowed, is something that I really have a hard time,
10 at this point, recommending, so please keep that in
11 mind.

12 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Thank you. All right.
13 So, Applicant's looking for our direction. I know there
14 are members of the public here. These are advertised
15 public hearing items, so I think the proper order,
16 Craig, would be to open the public hearing, take public
17 comment, and then the Board can have discussion, right?

18 MR. COLLIER: Yes. I think that would be the most
19 prudent way to do it.

20 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Thank you.
21 All right. We'll open the public hearing. Jill,
22 do you have speakers signed up?

23 THE SECRETARY: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay.

25 THE SECRETARY: Jose Gelabert-Navia.

1 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: And we'll try to stick to the
2 same time limitations as we did for the speakers on the
3 North Ponce project, please.

4 MR. GELABERT-NAVIA: You mean like the first one.
5 My name is Jose Gelabert-Navia. I am an
6 Architect, but tonight I'm speaking more as a resident.
7 I live on 600 Biltmore Way. And I'd like to address
8 some points as an architect and as a neighbor, and I
9 promise to be short.

10 As an architect, I rather not comment about the
11 design. I used to sit on this Board before, and the
12 reason I don't do it anymore is because I didn't feel it
13 was my position to design other people's projects, but I
14 would like to comment as one of the original, pretty
15 soon is going to be one of the surviving authors of the
16 Mediterranean Ordinance from 30 years ago, one of the
17 things that we try to do when we design, and we wrote
18 that Ordinance, is to allow for a number of elements,
19 which were true Mediterranean elements. And the trade
20 off was that the client or that the Developer would get
21 a series of bonuses that would give them additional FRA,
22 additional density, precisely so that they can do a lot
23 of the things that we felt-- and I actually had a very
24 good discussion with Ramon about where did the Ordinance
25 come from.

1 A lot of the issues that we tried, which we felt--
2 I felt certainly that strongly was the urban elements
3 that Mediterranean architecture had, and we thought it
4 was more important to legislate that, than to legislate
5 style. These elements were arcades. They were changing
6 roof lines. It was the proportions of the building.
7 And I think that the original design that was submitted,
8 that's why I came to support it a few meetings ago,
9 contained a lot of those things. And, yes, it had a
10 great deal of density, but it had those elements.

11 I can understand that the Applicant, after four
12 years, they're probably completely exhausted, and
13 they're ready to throw in the towel to whatever
14 direction they get, and whatever compromise they come
15 with the owners, but I think sometimes what you get is,
16 as they say, a camel is a horse designed by a committee.
17 And, again, there's been so many influences, so many
18 things that I think, yes, they have simplified the
19 project to something that might be appealing, because
20 they reduced density, they reduced height, but I frankly
21 feel for the City. The original project would have been
22 a better project than what is being submitted to you
23 today at the risk of upsetting my colleagues there.
24 And, so density doesn't always-- is the primary judge of
25 the project.

1 But the second item that I would like to speak
2 about, and then I will end, is more personal in that
3 this is as a neighbor, and this is the issue of the
4 rentals. The last time that I came to this meeting, it
5 was actually-- I found it pretty appalling to find some
6 of the neighbors, some of the ones that live in my
7 building, some of the ones that live in the building
8 next door, talking about renters, about the people that
9 were going to come to this building, as though the whole
10 neighborhood was going to be ruined by the renters. And
11 I don't know how many-- I'm sure a number of you are
12 aware that prior to 1960, the majority of the people in
13 the United States were renters. The whole idea that we
14 have now, that everyone has ownership, is actually a
15 recent phenomenon, that actually changed in 2008 when
16 the whole market crashed. And now the majority of
17 people are, again, beginning to be renters. And the
18 renters are not low-lives that are moving into the
19 neighborhood. The renters are people like my 89 year
20 old father, who I'm trying to move closer to where I
21 live, and now he lives in Puerto de Palmas, or the
22 renter is my niece, who's 32 years old, and just
23 graduated with a Degree from Harvard, and now is paying
24 off her student debt, and she needs to live in a rental.
25 So, to my neighbors, including the ones from my

1 building, that are probably going to tar and feather me
2 when I get back tonight, the make up of the building, I
3 think, can enhance the neighborhood.

4 And with regard to the traffic, again, some-- when
5 you were talking about Ponce, the amount of traffic that
6 is generated really depends on who lives in the
7 building. I'm probably one of the youngest ones who
8 lives in my building, and cars are not streaming in and
9 out, and that is the composition of most people that
10 live around that neighborhood.

11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.

13 THE SECRETARY: Paul Savage.

14 MR. SAVAGE: Good evening, Members of the Board.
15 It's my pleasure to see you again.

16 My name is Paul Savage. I have law offices at 100
17 Almeria Avenue, Suite 220. You may remember me from our
18 prior hearings on this matter. I'm here representing
19 the Valencia Grande Condominium Association. Their
20 building is a few lots down, at 642 and 650 Valencia.

21 My remarks-- and I think I may set a record by
22 coming within three minutes. I'm not sure, but my
23 remarks tonight are really purely technical and legal in
24 nature, and that is to say that what we have been
25 noticed with, and what was read in front of this meeting

1 by the Chair, according to the procedures, is a
 2 quasi-judicial resolution to review a Conditional Use
 3 Site Plan Review under the Zoning Code and Article 3,
 4 "Development Review", Division 4. And if you go in that
 5 section and look it up, I think that your Planning
 6 Director was indicating that there's an issue here, and
 7 that issue is that that is a set procedure, particularly
 8 when you get in the quasi-judicial arena, which this is,
 9 and if you pull that Code, there's a chart and language
 10 that explains the chart, and it talks about how you have
 11 to have a complete application. You go to the
 12 Development Review Committee, also to-- through Staff
 13 meetings, leading up to a Staff recommendation, and then
 14 this Board is very important. This Board, you know,
 15 this is the last stop before the City Commission. So
 16 there are a lot of municipal departments, other Boards,
 17 Staff recommendations. You don't have a resolution in
 18 front of you tonight. You don't have a Staff
 19 recommendation. You don't even have a complete
 20 application that's been opined on. None of the remarks
 21 today were tested at all by your Staff, which is what is
 22 supposed to happen. So I think that if we go forward,
 23 I'm just urging you, respectfully-- I appreciate the
 24 Applicant, the Applicant's counsel. I've been at these
 25 meetings. They-- I won't characterize them, but at

1 least they're having them, and they're reaching out. I
 2 think that's wonderful, but I would ask you,
 3 respectfully, not to accept the invitation tonight to
 4 give guidance and give more design cues and whatever
 5 they're asking you to do, because that's not what's been
 6 noticed. It's not according to the Code. They need to
 7 have a complete application. You can't vote. You're--
 8 what your duty is, in a quasi-judicial Site Review like
 9 this one, is to vote and to make findings to ultimately
 10 apprise the City Commission about whether you think they
 11 should approve the project or not. That's-- you know,
 12 Mr. Trias had another legislative item where we can have
 13 a lot of meetings and talk about policy and the wisdom
 14 of what we should do on North Ponce, and things like
 15 that, and those kinds of hearings can happen, but this
 16 is a quasi-judicial Site Plan Review that is not
 17 appropriate to have you weigh in and provide guidance,
 18 just like my side of the case is not allowed to come in
 19 and have hearings about what kind of objections and what
 20 kind of arguments you may find compelling that I may
 21 advance at a future hearing. It's just not fair.
 22 I also ask for--I have a petition of 30 to 40
 23 signatures asking that this be continued to the next
 24 hearing. If you remember, we had some colloquy. I
 25 requested a continuation last time to say, please come

1 back for a real-- when you really have it together, and
 2 we'll have a real meeting, instead of having everyone
 3 come out or not. So, again, I don't think that-- I,
 4 again, applaud the Applicant for reaching out, but I
 5 don't think that they get to have preconsensus in a
 6 quasi-judicial hearing. And I think that's-- I don't
 7 think I made it within my three minutes, probably.

8 I would like to put my signatures into the record.
 9 Oh, the Chair says, no, Mr. Savage, you cannot quite
 10 claim that record yet. So I think you get the gist of
 11 my remarks. I just think by Code you can't do it. I
 12 thank the Applicant. I look forward to continuing to
 13 work on this project, but there's nothing to vote on,
 14 and you can't help design the project in advance.

15 Thank you so much for listening.

16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you, Mr. Savage. Next
 17 speaker.

18 THE SECRETARY: Rolando Iglesias.

19 MR. IGLESIAS: Good evening, Board Members. My
 20 name is Rolando Iglesias. I reside at 600 Biltmore Way,
 21 Apartment 1104. I'm here in total support of the Villa
 22 Valencia project. I fully concur with what my neighbor,
 23 Jose Gelabert, previously stated. I personally, myself,
 24 liked the first design better, but that's for this Board
 25 to decide. I think that we should allow this project to

1 move forward. I think it's pretty much in accordance
 2 with the current plan that the City is going through
 3 right now. So I fully ask-- respectfully ask for your
 4 support for this project.

5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.

6 THE SECRETARY: Sonia Blair.

7 MS. BLAIR: Good evening. I'm Sonia Blair. I'm a
 8 real estate broker, and have been for over 30 years, and
 9 live at 2920 Segovia Street. I am very much in favor of
 10 this project to be built, and I also concur with Mr.
 11 Iglesias that I believe that the first drawings were
 12 better than the second, as Mr. Trias made a comment
 13 regarding that it was a square box.

14 I also agree with the last gentleman who spoke,
 15 because I do rent to a lot of people, and I don't think
 16 it's fair to put the wrong idea that rentals-- renters
 17 rather, are not the best people to have in the building.
 18 Today you could not rent anything in Coral Gables in
 19 this area for less than \$3,000 per meeting for a two/two
 20 in a brand new building. So if you don't make the
 21 proper amount of money per year, you cannot afford that.
 22 So, therefore, those people are usually professional
 23 people or like the other gentleman stated, someone who
 24 has already graduated and are paying off their loans.

25 So in addition to what Mr. Iglesias says, I

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1 definitely think that this project could go forward, and
 2 should do.
 3 Thank you very much.
 4 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 5 THE SECRETARY: Juan Castro Lopez.
 6 MR. LOPEZ: Juan Castro Lopez. My family owns the
 7 property that's adjacent to the Site. I fully support
 8 the project. I don't think that the Applicant is asking
 9 for anything that's not existing right now around the
 10 property. The building to the North has, I believe, 12
 11 or 13 stories. The building to the east is the same.
 12 The building across the street on Segovia has the same
 13 number of stories. And I don't think it would be out of
 14 line with what's in the neighborhood right now.
 15 There was one thing that wasn't mentioned here,
 16 and it's that a lot of residents have concerns about
 17 parking, and since the last meeting, there was a
 18 Residential Zone Parking area instated in the block, and
 19 the issue of parking has been lessened majorly. You can
 20 drive by the properties now, and during the day, when it
 21 was impossible to find a parking spot, now it's very
 22 easy. And in terms of traffic, I think the Applicant is
 23 right, the issue with traffic is just people driving
 24 trying to avoid Coral Way, because generally it backs up
 25 going west, and they choose Valencia instead. So I

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1 think that with some of the additions that they are
 2 proposing tonight, that issue would go away, too.
 3 Thank you.
 4 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 5 THE SECRETARY: Robert Parsley.
 6 MR. PARSLEY: I'm Robert Parsley. I live at 618
 7 Valencia. As I leave my front door, I look 400 yards
 8 down the way, and I want to see this building.
 9 I'm a landscape architect. I sit on a City Board.
 10 I restore preservation. I run the Beautification Board.
 11 I bring projects to the City as a Consultant. I am a
 12 Consultant for City projects, but I'm going to speak as
 13 a neighbor and as a resident. And I was quite in favor
 14 of the second version of the project. I liked the
 15 diversity, the architecture to the Mediterranean revival
 16 of the building was interesting. The density didn't
 17 bother me.
 18 I think to appease some neighbors that are going
 19 to be resistant to any change, we have dumped down the
 20 building to what's a box with a few little frills of
 21 Mediterranean fluff, to keep the density. I don't think
 22 that's the way to design, to our early architect's
 23 opinion. So I would recommend keeping that second
 24 higher density design. I think rentals are good.
 25 What I liked best about the neighborhood when I

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1 moved in about two years ago was the economic diversity.
 2 When I'd walk my dog-- thank you for the dog park idea.
 3 When I'd walk my dog, I would pass a presidential
 4 candidate-- a former presidential candidate. I would
 5 pass a plumber. I'd pass a school teacher. I'd pass a
 6 guy in, you know, hospital sweats, whatever they're
 7 called, the locksmith lived in the block, and I was
 8 quite surprised at the economic diversity in this small
 9 area, and that's a good thing for a city. That's what
 10 cities are supposed to be.
 11 I think the density helps traffic. I'm going to
 12 take the contrary view. The more people we can get
 13 close to Downtown, Coral Gables, the more people would
 14 leave their car in the garage and walk some place. I'm
 15 at the New French Village. I go to dinner there. I go
 16 shopping at the Publix. I actually walk. That's why I
 17 moved here. I think other people ought to have that
 18 opportunity, and not pretend that we live in a
 19 single-family residential suburban community this close
 20 to Downtown, Coral Gables. So I would recommend the
 21 Board support a denser, more vibrant architecturally
 22 interesting project.
 23 Thank you.
 24 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 25 MR. TRIAS: I would like to make a correction.

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1 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Sure.
 2 MR. TRIAS: All of the projects have the same
 3 density, the same number of units, basically. So
 4 there's no difference in density.
 5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay.
 6 Jill, do we have any other speakers?
 7 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Let me-- just to clarify that
 8 last comment. Of the three versions that we sent to
 9 you-- that we've shown you today, the original one was
 10 103 units. The one that we revised, pursuant to your
 11 comments in September, is 90 units, and then the most
 12 recent one, in response to the neighbors, is 102. So
 13 they're relatively close, but there is a difference in
 14 each one.
 15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Jill, do we have more
 16 speakers?
 17 THE SECRETARY: Yes, one more.
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Mr. Leen, did you want to--
 19 MR. LEEN: I would just like to provide an opinion
 20 to the Board but after.
 21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 22 THE SECRETARY: Rhonda Anderson.
 23 MS. ANDERSON: I have a few brief comments. Aside
 24 from seconding the comments of Mr. Trias and Mr. Savage,
 25 where I don't think we have enough here for the Board

1 to-- even if you're going to provide comments-- to give
2 comments.

3 In the comments you received, my second point is a
4 matter of perspective.

5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: I'm sorry. Can we get your
6 name and address, for the record?

7 MS. ANDERSON: Not a problem. Rhonda Anderson,
8 2715 Hernando. I live in a single-family home, south of
9 the project.

10 Perspective is what I wanted to talk to you about,
11 because the comments that you've been hearing about the
12 dumbing down of the building, about the height of the
13 building, have been coming largely, I notice, from folks
14 that live in large buildings to the north and to the
15 west and to the east of the project.

16 The folks that I have been speaking with, a large
17 of who are not here today, because this was very last
18 minute put on the calendar-- we didn't have a colorized
19 version of it-- and as far as dumbing down a project, if
20 you look at the history of pedestrian areas, where you
21 have lots of foot traffic, such as in New York, by and
22 large, you don't have buildings from the early era of
23 New York more than five or six stories tall. We're in
24 single-family homes. We do not want to be looking at
25 120-foot tall buildings when you're in your pool in your

1 backyard. There's very, very, very strong opposition
2 from the folks on Almeria, on Catalonia, on Palermo, and
3 all of those streets where their back yards are
4 literally going to be looking up at the face of this old
5 structure, and that's why this builder met with the
6 neighborhood and listened to their comments, because you
7 don't have a colorized version, you're not appreciating
8 the Mediterranean aspects in that building that are
9 existing in historical buildings of the Mediterranean
10 era without having to go up to 120 feet to do so.

11 My second comment has to do with the Overlay
12 District language, as it's written. The proposed
13 building is only 90 feet, but now we're going to be
14 allowing even a city parking lot to be developed later
15 on in the future with a building of 120-feet.

16 I think we need to look at the perspective of what
17 we're doing, and what we're allowing in the future, and
18 not allow these very large buildings to go into areas,
19 so we don't have the mistakes that occurred when you
20 preapprove things, such as you did-- not necessarily
21 you, personally, but the City did with the Aloft Hotel,
22 and now we have a building that is creating a hazard for
23 pedestrian traffic.

24 The other comment that I have, that would be, I
25 think, constructive for you when considering the traffic

1 calming measures that have been proposed, I do walk the
2 area quite a bit, because I do have two dogs that I take
3 on long walks, and by and large people do want the
4 diverters that I speak to, to stop the cut through
5 traffic in the morning, because it basically comes from
6 Westchester straight on through, back and forth
7 everyday.

8 Okay. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you. All right. Those
10 are the cards that we had.

11 Mr. City Attorney wanted to give an opinion.

12 MR. LEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's a pleasure
13 to be here. I just wanted to speak a little bit about
14 your authority as a quasi-judicial Board, as an issue
15 has been raised regarding whether you can provide, in a
16 sense, recommendations or advice, advisory opinions on a
17 matter. And I say this with great respect for Mr.
18 Savage, who I think highly of as an attorney, and I
19 understand the issue that he has raised.

20 When you're acting in a quasi-judicial capacity,
21 it is true, there's a limitation in the sense that you
22 would not design the project, and you would not
23 basically tell someone, if you do this, this and this,
24 at a future meeting, we'll approve it. You don't give
25 advice-- I agree, you would not tell someone, do it this

1 way and we'll approve it, and if you do it this way, we
2 won't, and then sort of lock yourself into a future
3 meeting.

4 That being said, you do have a significant amount
5 of authority. According to the Zoning Code, you can
6 approve, approve with conditions, deny, and also you can
7 continue matters. And you can continue matters with
8 instructions. So, in my view, you do have an active
9 application before you. You have several items that you
10 could vote on. In doing that, you could approve,
11 approve with conditions, deny or continue with
12 instructions. And in doing that, you can say, basically
13 in relation to this application, what you would prefer.
14 And in that sense you're acting as a quasi-judicial
15 body, because you do have that active application.

16 So to the extent that the Applicant has come
17 before you and said, "Well, this is an alternative." In
18 my view, you could give instructions on that, whether
19 you believe that that is an appropriate condition of
20 approval, whether you are denying the application in a
21 sense, but in a sense deferring it and asking them to
22 come back with that, whether you're continuing the
23 matter and asking them to come back with that, but to be
24 clear, whatever you decide here doesn't bind you at the
25 next meeting, because you told them to do this, now you

1 have to recommend approval.
 2 And that's where I believe Mr. Savage is correct.
 3 You could not say, "if you do this, we will recommend
 4 approval in the future." You'd have to have another
 5 public hearing on that at the next meeting, if it's a
 6 new application. If it's not materially different, you
 7 may not have to. You know, there's a lot of things you
 8 would have to look at in that respect.

9 Do you have any questions, any Members of the
 10 Board?

11 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: I don't. Any Members of the
 12 Board at this point?

13 MR. LEEN: One other thing, you do have-- and I
 14 should say this, because this has come up in another
 15 matter. You do have significant authority in granting
 16 conditions of approval, even after the public hearing.

17 So ultimately, you're advising the Commission as
 18 to what you believe is in the best interest of the City.

19 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you very much.

20 All right. So there was still-- the public
 21 hearing is open. The public comments are over.

22 Counselor, you want to wrap up.

23 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Just a couple of minutes, not
 24 necessarily rebuttal, but perhaps echoing some comments
 25 that we heard already.

1 On the issue of, you know, what are we proposing
 2 right now, what are we doing right now, many of you or
 3 all of you, really, have been on this Board or similar
 4 Boards for a while. Quite often, in the development of
 5 a project, you come across issues where you start
 6 proposing alternative designs to try to address them,
 7 and that's what we're doing here. And that's what we're
 8 doing here and trying to seek that input. We've already
 9 filed an application actually a very long time ago; have
 10 gone through numerous reviews, numerous times, even
 11 before this Board; numerous neighborhood meetings, and we
 12 are looking-- we're still moving forward with that same
 13 project. We're looking to see what is the design
 14 perhaps or the proposal that can reach consensus. If we
 15 need to, we can go back with whatever design is sort of
 16 preferred to the Board of Architects or whatever, you
 17 know, other Boards need to review it, but we're still
 18 part of this application.

19 Think of the deprivation of due process, the
 20 unfairness it would be if, after four years, and the
 21 amount of money that's been spent already to get to this
 22 point in the process, you were to essentially tell us,
 23 do over. You know, start again from scratch.

24 It's the same property. Same type of program.
 25 You know, we're sort of talking about design here.

1 The other thing that I would mention out there is
 2 to sort of echo Mr. Gelabert's comments, because he
 3 brought up something very, very important; that quite
 4 often in the City of Coral Gables to bring about the
 5 design that you want, you have to incentivise it with
 6 what we refer to as "Mediterranean Design Bonuses" which
 7 gives you additional FAR, and density for development.

8 In this case here, we are in the only Zoning
 9 District in the City of Coral Gables which requires
 10 Mediterranean design, but then does not give you any
 11 bonus for the sake of doing Mediterranean design and
 12 trying to incentivise it. So indeed that perhaps
 13 explains why the North side of Valencia has seen so
 14 little redevelopment. Everywhere else in the City, a
 15 bonus is awarded for that sort of design that you want
 16 to encourage, but not here.

17 With that said, I'll leave it for what we're
 18 really here for, your discussion and guidance.

19 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Just so the record's clear, we
 20 know you're looking for some input. We'll see if the
 21 Board is willing to give any, but I'm going to assume--
 22 and if you could confirm, that as part of that, you are
 23 ultimately looking for a deferral of the three items
 24 tonight?

25 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: How you want to memorialize

1 your recommendation, I leave up to you and your City
 2 Attorney. You know, as far as how to-- you know, do you
 3 do a motion, do you just state comments. You know, the
 4 more direct and clear direction that you can give us in
 5 comments, the better, of course, from our point of view.

6 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: But at the end of the day, we
 7 need to dispose of these three items one way or the
 8 other. So I think, as the City Attorney advised us,
 9 it's either going to be approval, denial or deferral,
 10 and I'm assuming, since you have new iterations that you
 11 are looking to put through the process, ideally with
 12 some comments from this Board, that you would seek the
 13 deferral.

14 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Generally, I would say so. I
 15 would like to see what the discussion is, because we
 16 could be at a point, too, where we're being stretched in
 17 all directions. We're not going to make anybody happy,
 18 and we might just tell you, you know, move forward with
 19 the vote with the proposed, you know, design that we had
 20 originally submitted to you.

21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Thank you.

22 MR. LEEN: Mr. Chair, ultimately, no matter what
 23 they request, it's within your discretion. So if you
 24 think-- they've certainly raised the possibility that
 25 you can send it back to them with some instruction.

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1 Those instructions don't bind you when it comes back.
 2 It's not an Estoppel, it's called. That doesn't mean
 3 you have to vote in favor of it, but you're giving them
 4 your thoughts in conjunction with the continuance.
 5 Likewise, you could approve the actual application. You
 6 could approve with conditions, and those conditions
 7 could be some of these changes they've suggested, and
 8 those are all recommendations to the City Commission.
 9 You could also recommend denial.
 10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Very good. Thank you.
 11 All right. The public hearing is closed. Any
 12 Members of the Board-- Marshall.
 13 MR. BELLIN: Just a point of clarification. You
 14 do get a bonus for Mediterranean Architecture in the
 15 MSFA, but it's only with respect to density, not FAR,
 16 not height.
 17 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Right.
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Anybody else?
 19 MS. MENENDEZ: I think the hard thing that I'm
 20 having or the hard part of this whole thing is, I really
 21 appreciate when Staff reviews applications, and we're
 22 missing that here. I mean, we just heard from our
 23 Planning Director that what you're proposing today is
 24 not something that he would recommend. So, to me,
 25 that's the component of this whole thing that I really

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1 rely on, and we don't have it today, so I'm not sure--
 2 I would really have a question to our Architects.
 3 Can't you achieve both? Can't you achieve, you know,
 4 some type of a much better design, yet keep the
 5 intensity lower? I mean, that's the question I have to
 6 the Architects of the Board. But, again, I would really
 7 want to have the application reviewed by Staff, whatever
 8 application that they want to move forward with, but I
 9 just heard our Planning Director say that that one
 10 wasn't one that he would support, as far as the design.
 11 MR. TRIAS: The application has not been reviewed.
 12 The building has not been presented to the Board of
 13 Architects. The building is actually-- it has more
 14 units. It has more units than the last version. So
 15 it's misleading to think that-- some people had the
 16 impression-- the misimpression that a building that has
 17 less height was less dense, not true.
 18 So all of these issues need to be addressed. Now,
 19 I want to say that I really appreciate Ms. Anderson's
 20 comments, because she's actually right, in the sense
 21 that great cities have a height that is similar to
 22 what's being proposed.
 23 Now, having made that comment, the next step is to
 24 design a building that is done properly, and has the
 25 quality that the City of Coral Gables requires. That

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1 has not taken place. I mean, that certainly-- that is
 2 my professional expertise, and I can assure you that
 3 that has not taken place.
 4 Now, it would be a good thing to do that. Maybe
 5 the Applicant is able to do it, but certainly it hasn't
 6 been done, and you are not ready to take any action at
 7 this point.
 8 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Mr. Rodriguez?
 9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. As I understand it, and
 10 please, Ramon, correct me if I'm wrong, we can't-- even
 11 if-- I'm not even suggesting remotely that I'd be
 12 inclined to vote favorably for what's just presented,
 13 the latest proposal, but we can't even vote for that,
 14 because it hasn't gone through proper channels, right?
 15 What Mario, I think, was saying is, we could vote for
 16 one of the earlier proposals that have gone through the
 17 proper channels, is that--
 18 MR. TRIAS: But, in addition, for example, the
 19 traffic improvements that the Applicant described in
 20 some detail have not been reviewed. I just verified
 21 that with our Staff. So I really-- I don't know what is
 22 being proposed at this point. As your Director of
 23 Planning and Zoning, I really don't know what the
 24 proposal is.
 25 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I think what he's asking for is

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1 guidance from the Board. I mean, it's pretty
 2 straight-forward.
 3 MR. LEEN: You do have a pending application.
 4 They brought this alternate view, which has not been
 5 fully vetted by Staff. If there's parts of it you want
 6 to impose as a condition, you're welcome to. If you
 7 think-- they've invited the possibility of a continuance
 8 for Staff to look at this alternate proposal, and that
 9 may be what you instruct. Whatever you do, though, I
 10 would recommend you do it through a vote--
 11 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Right.
 12 MR. LEEN: --Where you're doing one of those
 13 things, approve, approve with conditions, deny or
 14 continue.
 15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: I agree with Maria. I rely on
 16 Staff's recommendation, opinion, of course, with the
 17 presentations. At this point, we've had, I'm going to
 18 call this, two-and-a-half iterations. We've had two, we
 19 have this one, which is a rough rendering, which is
 20 tough to discern from our packets, even from what's on
 21 the screen. It becomes much easier if something is
 22 brought to us kind of all wrapped up, with a full
 23 review, so we know exactly which iteration and which
 24 version we're looking at.
 25 Anybody have any other comments? Anybody want to

1 make a motion?

2 MR. BEHAR: Let me say something, for the record.

3 I do not-- and I agree with some of the comments-- I

4 don't think like the way the building has been forced to

5 be-- take shape-- I think I remember seeing a more, you

6 know, variety of height incorporated into the project.

7 I think that we should allow the Planning Department and

8 the Board of Architects to have their say. I agree with

9 you guys, but I think that to keep this building at a

10 height that may be more in keeping with the desire of

11 the residents, we're forcing or they're forcing a more

12 fat and lower building.

13 I have for Staff, and whoever, as of today, just

14 for clarification, what is the height permitted in that

15 location?

16 MR. TRIAS: The Site specifically permits 150

17 feet.

18 MR. BEHAR: Okay. What is the density permitted

19 today in that location?

20 MR. TRIAS: It's 40 units per acre with the Med

21 Bonus.

22 MR. BEHAR: The FAR is 2.5?

23 MR. TRIAS: Yeah, right. They're asking for

24 additional FAR or maybe the Applicant can explain more.

25 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: The residential density that is

1 permitted today is 50 units per acre.

2 MR. BEHAR: 60 units per acre?

3 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: No, 50. 40 as a base, and then

4 you get an additional 10 with the Mediterranean bonus.

5 And your other question was FAR?

6 MR. BEHAR: Yeah.

7 MS. MENENDEZ: FAR.

8 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: 2.0.

9 MR. BEHAR: 2.0.

10 MS. MENENDEZ: 2.0.

11 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: That's it.

12 MS. MENENDEZ: And you're at 2.5?

13 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: It depends on which design

14 you're talking about. There is--

15 MS. MENENDEZ: This last design. I don't think

16 this--

17 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: The most recent design is close

18 to 3.0.

19 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay. This most recent design, is

20 this a serious design?

21 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: By all means, definitely. You

22 know, it's something--

23 MS. MENENDEZ: If we were to tell you today, "Go

24 with it," you'd do it?

25 MS. GARCIA-SERRA: Let me turn around. Yes.

1 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay. Well--

2 MR. BEHAR: I would not be ready to tell them, "Go

3 with it." Let's make sure that's--

4 MS. MENENDEZ: No. I'm just commenting, because

5 to me it's such a drastic difference, and-- you know,

6 again, I think it needs to be vetted, but if that's the

7 serious design-- I mean, I'm hearing from the Planning

8 Director that that's not going to be considered.

9 MR. TRIAS: And the request, if I understand it

10 correctly-- and, again, I haven't really reviewed it,

11 it's twice the density, right, that's allowed?

12 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: The increase in density would

13 be, yes, 200 units.

14 MR. TRIAS: So the request is twice the density

15 and additional FAR.

16 MS. MENENDEZ: So I guess the question I have,

17 again, and maybe-- I don't know, maybe nobody can answer

18 it is, can you achieve a less intensity, but yet a much

19 more pleasant design with the heights and variation of

20 the elevation? Can you achieve that?

21 I mean, I think that the comment that I remember

22 from the public is, intensity. The fact that there was

23 more, and there was going to be more vehicles, that

24 there was going to be more activity as a result of the

25 intensity of the development.

1 You know, so-- amenities for the public,

2 fantastic, on board. That's basically what we've been

3 talking about, and I think the public has been talking

4 about. The park, great. But you haven't really

5 addressed, I think, the intensity, you know.

6 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Well, the traffic issue we've

7 tried to address by those improvements that we've talked

8 about.

9 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes. And I think that's good.

10 We're almost there. You know, I'm not too keen on the

11 little median. I don't know if that's going to do it,

12 but, again, I haven't looked at the report. I really

13 don't know what the traffic engineer has proposed, and

14 why he's proposed that, but you're there-- I mean,

15 you're working toward that. But the design-- I mean, to

16 me it's like-- you're really not achieving less

17 intensity.

18 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: If you are looking at it as--

19 if you're also considering height as part of intensity,

20 we've tried to address that by going down, but--

21 MS. MENENDEZ: No. Again-- you know, I like the

22 variation of the elevations. I don't know if 150 feet

23 is the number, but what you presented us today really

24 doesn't cut it. I mean, as far as design--

25 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: From a design perspective.

1 MS. MENENDEZ: --Because the intensity is still
 2 there.
 3 MR. BEHAR: But, you know, Maria, as Mario said,
 4 the intensity is-- my opinion, is the height and the
 5 density, you know, to measure that intensity.
 6 I agree with everything you're saying, and I would
 7 not support this project the way it is today. Your
 8 land-- I don't have the package with me, how big is your
 9 site?
 10 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: The site is a little over an
 11 acre. It's 1.03 acres.
 12 MR. BEHAR: 50,000 square feet.
 13 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: 45,000.
 14 MR. BEHAR: 45,000.
 15 I mean, I don't have-- and I said it before, and
 16 we could go back on the record, and look at the record,
 17 I don't have a problem-- I think my colleague here, who
 18 didn't agree with me today on something, he would go
 19 back and agree, that the density-- because the units
 20 could be a little bit smaller, that's what increased
 21 density.
 22 We did-- I did a rough number last time, they
 23 could do it-- with the same FAR, they were able to get--
 24 achieve bigger units. And in my opinion, if you give
 25 the opportunity to do smaller units, not increasing so

1 much the FAR, but smaller units, you could increase the
 2 density, and allow for-- for a more diverse project,
 3 meaning-- and to answer Gelabert's comment, you're able
 4 to get more affordable-- which to Sonia's point, Coral
 5 Gables is not really an affordable community when you
 6 compare it to other communities.
 7 But to the point where-- I don't have a big issue
 8 with the density. I am not supportive of the 102, 103
 9 units. I think that whether-- whether it backfires on
 10 you or not, you gave us an example where you had 90
 11 units on that one particular, which is probably, in my
 12 opinion, more in keeping. I-- despite of-- I don't know
 13 where this covered park came from or if this is
 14 something that the neighborhood asked for, I don't see a
 15 lot of value into that covered park. I think I'd much
 16 rather see units, like townhome units, that are on the
 17 streets, instead of a covered park, because that covered
 18 park, unless you proffer a covenant that will stay in
 19 perpetuity, that could be covered, that could be closed,
 20 and then the neighborhood would not benefit.
 21 I personally like the images that you had of the
 22 park facing--
 23 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Hernando.
 24 MR. BEHAR: --Hernando before.
 25 MS. MENENDEZ: A little bigger, though.

1 MR. BEHAR: Well, it could be a little bigger.
 2 MS. MENENDEZ: 3,000 square feet doesn't--
 3 MR. BEHAR: You're right.
 4 MS. MENENDEZ: Two or three dogs, maybe.
 5 MR. BEHAR: But you could be-- but the location--
 6 to me, that would be more of an infill park than a
 7 covered--
 8 MS. MENENDEZ: No, I agree.
 9 MR. BEHAR: Okay. Now, I do think you could have
 10 a-- and to answer your point-- a compromise where you
 11 could do, maybe not such a--
 12 MS. MENENDEZ: Boxy--
 13 MR. BEHAR: --Boxy building, and have some
 14 elements that go up to get closer to that look. Maybe
 15 you do-- you don't have to go up to 120 feet. I don't
 16 think that's going to be appropriate, but maybe you
 17 could have-- the architect could have a compromise--
 18 come up with a solution that doesn't go up that high,
 19 breaks the box significantly, and you come back with
 20 less number of units. I don't think that the 3.5-- how
 21 much are you asking?
 22 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: 3.0 is what the most recent--
 23 MR. BEHAR: --3.0 FAR is going to be doable. I
 24 think that's a lot, but I think that maybe sacrificing
 25 some units will decrease the request for the additional

1 FAR.
 2 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Somewhat close to this
 3 proposal, which is 2.5 FAR.
 4 MR. PEREZ: That's the first--
 5 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: No. That was in response to
 6 your comments in September. No, excuse me, in response
 7 to your comments in January. It's never been-- this is
 8 the first time you've seen it. It hasn't been submitted
 9 to you before.
 10 MS. MENENDEZ: This hasn't been submitted to us.
 11 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: The City Staff had seen it, you
 12 know, but it had never been brought before you.
 13 MS. MENENDEZ: Right.
 14 MR. PEREZ: So the first option--
 15 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: It was, though, the starting
 16 point with our discussion with the neighbors.
 17 MS. MENENDEZ: I see.
 18 MR. PEREZ: Mario, the first option was how many
 19 units?
 20 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: It was that one, and it was 103
 21 units.
 22 MR. PEREZ: So the first option was 103. The
 23 third option was 103 or 102?
 24 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: 102.
 25 MR. PEREZ: 102, okay. The first option was how

1 high?
 2 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: 120 feet, 12 stories.
 3 MR. PEREZ: And my understanding, again, thinking
 4 back to that first-- to that hearing, that height was as
 5 of right?
 6 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct.
 7 MR. PEREZ: And that first option, was FAR
 8 requesting a 2.5 or 3?
 9 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: 3.
 10 MR. PEREZ: 3.
 11 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Uh-huh.
 12 MS. MENENDEZ: And what's the FAR--
 13 MR. PEREZ: So to Maria's point, I mean, I-- to go
 14 back to the first option, it seems to me that the only
 15 issue that we had as a Board was the FAR issue?
 16 MS. MENENDEZ: Yeah.
 17 MR. BELLIN: The distinction between density and
 18 intensity is, density is the number of units. Intensity
 19 is the FAR.
 20 MR. PEREZ: But your issue was intensity.
 21 MR. BELLIN: My issue was intensity, because
 22 that's what drives the massing, not the number of units.
 23 It's the amount of square footage in the building, the
 24 FAR. So I thought that the-- an FAR of 3.0 was a
 25 little--

1 MR. PEREZ: But the first option was 2.5, not 3.0.
 2 MR. BELLIN: No, that one was--
 3 MR. PEREZ: The first option was--
 4 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: The first option was 3.0. The
 5 second one, which is the one that's before you there, is
 6 2.5.
 7 MR. BELLIN: And you can drop to 2.5, because you
 8 dropped the number of units.
 9 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct.
 10 MR. BELLIN: So I think what you need to do is
 11 come up with a way to balance what you really can live
 12 with, and be within with the parameters, so that when it
 13 gets to the Commission, they can live with it.
 14 MR. BEHAR: And that was to the point where I was
 15 saying you offer 90 units. Maybe 90 units is a magic
 16 number that you could live with. You could do-- maybe
 17 have-- not-- definitely not 3.0. Maybe that 2.5. You
 18 don't have to go 12 stories. You can go maybe-- you
 19 know, balance it out to have a compromise where you have
 20 the-- you reach a point where you have some-- a little
 21 bit more units, little bit more FAR, but you give also
 22 more--
 23 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Public benefit.
 24 MR. BEHAR: Volumetric to the building-- more
 25 movement to the building.

1 MS. MENENDEZ: And a bigger park.
 2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Julio.
 3 MR. GRABIEL: I have a lot of problems with this
 4 project.
 5 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: With which one? Well--
 6 MR. GRABIEL: This one.
 7 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: The most recent design.
 8 MR. GRABIEL: The most recent design.
 9 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Okay.
 10 MR. GRABIEL: I think there is-- the FAR we talked
 11 about already of 3 is too much. Closer to 2, I'd be
 12 happier. The closer to 2 that you get, I think the
 13 happier that this Board will be. But in addition to
 14 that, any change to FAR, and intensity and density,
 15 there's got to be something for the community. And,
 16 with all due respect to the Developer and the Architect,
 17 a covered porch and a strip as a dog park, doesn't do it
 18 for me. That is not community benefit. That's not
 19 public benefit. That doesn't do anything for the
 20 street. It doesn't do anything for the neighborhood.
 21 It doesn't do anything for the public.
 22 So I think you have to think, also, of what else
 23 can you do. You know, if you want to get the benefit of
 24 additional density in a higher FAR, you have to come up
 25 with something that's serious. And \$100,000 worth of

1 traffic improvements doesn't count for me at all. I
 2 mean, that's something that is nothing for a project of
 3 this size. So you have to come up with something that's
 4 more important and more of a benefit to the community
 5 than just a 30-foot covered dog park. It doesn't do it.
 6 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: The open space that was in this
 7 proposal, the second proposal, let's say, I think would
 8 be more in keeping with what you're--
 9 MR. GRABIEL: I think it's a better one. It gives
 10 green to the street, people see it, it's more
 11 beneficial, but I'm not going to tell you what to do,
 12 but I think you have to make a commitment, as a
 13 Developer and as an Architect, that there's really a
 14 serious benefit to the City. I don't see it.
 15 Asking us to go ahead and vote on that kind of an
 16 increase in FAR, without seeing anything that improves
 17 the quality of life of that neighborhood, in my book,
 18 just doesn't cut it.
 19 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Well, we're making every effort
 20 to try and go in that direction. That's why we spent so
 21 much time, you know, in these meetings and so forth.
 22 And indeed, you know, I think some of the proposals that
 23 we've had of open space, traffic improvements,
 24 pedestrian improvements, you know, are serious. You
 25 know, they could be enhanced. There could be more, but

1 we also have to remember the scale of the project, too,
 2 which in deed is not a small project, it also isn't
 3 Mediterranean Village where, for example, you know, tens
 4 of millions of dollars are being contributed for the
 5 building improvements and that sort of thing.
 6 I think everything has to be proportionate to
 7 what's being proposed.
 8 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you. Anybody have any
 9 additional comments or did somebody want to make a
 10 motion?
 11 MR. BELLIN: I'd much prefer this solution than
 12 the one you proposed today, and I'm not even sure that
 13 that's a real serious proposal.
 14 I mean, it's sort of like saying, "Listen fellas,
 15 here's what you could get if you don't give us that."
 16 And, for me, the height is not the problem, and the
 17 density is not the problem, it's the intensity. So
 18 maybe you need to come with some kind of a combination
 19 of reducing some of the units closer to maybe 2.4, 2.3,
 20 because, for us, we just could make recommendations, but
 21 you've got to take it to the Commission, and --
 22 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 23 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Any possibility I can ask for
 24 two minutes just to consult with my client?
 25 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: You've heard-- you asked the

1 Board for kind of thoughts and guidance. I think you
 2 have gotten it. I think it's incumbent upon the
 3 Applicant now to go back, do what you need to do, work
 4 with your Staff, and it will eventually get back to us.
 5 Anybody?
 6 MR. BEHAR: I don't think this project-- I'm not
 7 ready to consider the project that they presented today.
 8 So I don't think there's any other option.
 9 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Would you like to move to
 10 defer it?
 11 MR. BEHAR: I would, but let me--
 12 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: I need two minutes to talk to
 13 my client.
 14 MR. LEEN: I would prefer that, if it's okay Mr.
 15 Chair, that you give them two minutes to see if they'll
 16 agree to a continuance, which would be preferable than
 17 an imposed continuance.
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Is that what we need to talk
 19 about?
 20 MR. LEEN: That's what he wants to talk to his
 21 client about.
 22 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Sorry, I thought you were
 23 trying to talk about an FAR agreement.
 24 MS. GARCIA-SERRA: No.
 25 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Oh, okay. Sorry. That's why

1 I said-- my apologies.
 2 MR. BEHAR: Can we take a--
 3 MR. COLLIER: Don't anybody leave.
 4 MS. MENENDEZ: Can we take--
 5 MR. LEEN: Of course.
 6 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Should we take--
 7 MR. LEEN: If you have something easy, you can.
 8 MR. PEREZ: Let's temporarily pass it.
 9 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: No, Albert, we're moving on to
 10 a different item.
 11 MS. MENENDEZ: We're going to take-- for a few
 12 minutes, and then you can go to the--
 13 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yeah. They're out talking.
 14 We'll put it off to the side. Discussion,
 15 discussion.
 16 All right. Everybody okay with taking Number 9,
 17 the Notice?
 18 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.
 19 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: All right. Item Number 9, an
 20 Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables,
 21 Florida providing for text amendments to the City of
 22 Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, Article 3,
 23 "Development Review," Division 3, "Uniform Notice and
 24 Procedures for Public Hearing," Section 3-302, "Notice"
 25 expanding the notice area and revising procedural

1 requirements for public hearing notifications; providing
 2 for repealer provision, severability clause,
 3 codification, and providing for an effective date.
 4 MR. BELLIN: I'll make a motion to approve.
 5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Is there a Staff--
 6 MS. MENENDEZ: I second.
 7 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Is there a Staff presentation?
 8 MR. WU: We do not. We'd be glad to answer any
 9 questions, but, please, this is a public hearing. You
 10 want to open up the public questions.
 11 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Right. Okay. So there's no
 12 presentation by Staff. Public hearing is open if
 13 there's anybody that would like to speak on this item.
 14 MR. BEHAR: What's the area we're expanding?
 15 MS. MENENDEZ: It's from 1,000 to 1,500.
 16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Seeing nobody, public hearing
 17 is closed. Right now it's-- yeah, from 1,000 to 1,500,
 18 but only for-- it's only 1,500 for items coming to the
 19 Planning and Zoning Board.
 20 MR. WU: Yes, sir.
 21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Not for anything else. And it
 22 includes, notice must go to tenants. Although it says,
 23 it's only if the tenant is indicated in the current tax
 24 roll.
 25 MS. MENENDEZ: It doesn't make sense.

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1 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Correct. So it's-- right.
 2 Detailed.
 3 How long have we had the 1,000 foot requirement?
 4 MR. BOLYARD: For the record, Scot Bolyard,
 5 Principal Planner for the City of Coral Gables. For as
 6 long as I can remember, and I've been here for 12 years.
 7 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. What's the impetus to
 8 go to 1,500?
 9 MR. BOLYARD: That's the direction--
 10 MR. WU: It's a request by the Commission. It was
 11 up for discussion, and the Commission directed us to
 12 share some thoughts with you. We thought expanding it
 13 incrementally-- there was some idea of expanding it to
 14 2,500. We thought expanding it from 1,000 to 1,500 is
 15 appropriate.
 16 MR. BELLIN: And we have a motion.
 17 MS. MENENDEZ: And I second it.
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Any further discussion by any
 19 Board Members? All right. We've had 1,000 for so long.
 20 That seems to work.
 21 All right. Jill, call the roll.
 22 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiel?
 23 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.
 24 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?
 25 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.

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1 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?
 2 MR. PEREZ: Yes.
 3 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?
 4 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 5 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 6 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 7 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?
 8 MR. BELLIN: Yes.
 9 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?
 10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.
 11 They are still talking.
 12 MR. WU: You still have Number 8.
 13 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Well, we're trying to get
 14 through quick ones while they're out there talking. Is
 15 there someone here on Number 8, the day care?
 16 Is the Applicant here? Yes.
 17 Hold on. I'm not calling it up yet, sorry. I'm
 18 just trying-- No, hold on. I'm just trying to see who's
 19 here first.
 20 Anybody in the audience here in favor of Item 8,
 21 which is for the day care, conditional use approval?
 22 Anybody here to object to it?
 23 All right. So let's read in Item Number 8. A
 24 Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables,
 25 Florida granting conditional use approval pursuant to

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1 Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review," Division 4,
 2 "Conditional Uses," for a day care within a mixed-use
 3 development on the property legally described as the
 4 East 12.64 feet of Lot 3, all of Lots 7-45 and the alley
 5 lying between, Block 35, Coral Gables Section, known as
 6 320 Giralda Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida; including
 7 required conditions; providing for a repealer
 8 provision, providing for a severability clause, and
 9 providing for an effective date.
 10 Let's see, we've got the City and Applicant.
 11 MR. ROBERTS: Good evening. Leonard Roberts, the
 12 City of Coral Gables Economic Development Assistant
 13 Director and the City's Real Estate Manager.
 14 This property is located in the Gables Grande,
 15 which the actual land is owned by the City of Coral
 16 Gables, and we lease that out to a company called
 17 Starwood Capital. On my other hat, as the Assistant
 18 Director of Economic Development, I'd like to talk to
 19 you a little bit about the economic benefit of this
 20 project.
 21 When we look at this Site, and we look at the
 22 subject Site and the surrounding area about three miles
 23 out, we have a need for about-- we have about 12,000
 24 children under the age of four in that area. If we use
 25 national averages to apply to the actual 12,000, there's

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1 approximately 50 percent of kids who are in day care.
 2 That leaves a need for about 6,000 kids within the
 3 three-mile area that need day care.
 4 Currently, the City has about-- in the area about
 5 19 day cares that accommodate about 2,000 kids under the
 6 age of four. That leaves a demand for roughly 4,000
 7 additional children. This day care is going to absorb
 8 probably about 150, I think, of those students. So as
 9 the City's Economic Development Team, we urge that you
 10 guys take this seriously into consideration, and we'd
 11 like to recommend it as the Economic Development Board--
 12 sorry Economic Development Department.
 13 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Thank you. The
 14 Applicant.
 15 MR. DAYAL: Yes. My name is Sarat Dayal. I've
 16 been charged with the responsibility of opening and
 17 managing a preschool, and with me today is Marisa
 18 Plucino. Her family is investing in the project, and
 19 they would be working with me to run their daily
 20 operations.
 21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Could we just get both your
 22 addresses, for the record, please?
 23 MR. DAYAL: Yes. Go ahead.
 24 MS. PLUCINO: Marisa Plucino, it's--
 25 MR. COLLIER: You need to speak into the

1 microphone.

2 MS. PLUCINO: Oh, yes. 363 Aragon Avenue,
3 Apartment 612-W, Coral Gables, Florida 33134.

4 MR. DAYAL: Marisa might have the shortest commute
5 in Coral Gables. She lives in the same building.

6 My address is 19200 S.W. 57th Court in Southwest
7 Ranches in Broward County.

8 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay.

9 MR. DAYAL: I just wanted to add to do what Mr.
10 Robert's mentioned regarding the need for childcare in
11 that area. There are only about 30 percent of children
12 in a three mile radius of this site that are served by
13 childcare within Coral Gables. The other 70 percent
14 have to probably be dropped off in other communities.

15 Also, in the CBD, there is only one preschool,
16 Vanguard, and that's fairly up north on Ponce, and--
17 quite up north, almost touching Southwest 8th Street.
18 So we would be the only one open serving the CBD. So
19 those two really bring a benefit to the community, and
20 there are a lot of residents there, as well as people
21 who come to work, who can bring the children with them,
22 and just walk them over to the child care, and we're
23 looking forward to that.

24 We have done two projects very similar to this
25 directly on Brickell Avenue, in the Financial District,

1 and they have been very successful, serving both the
2 residents, as well as the working population.

3 The ages would be, as you have seen in your
4 reports, age infant to four years old. We'll provide
5 employment for 23 child care teachers. And, once open,
6 we should have a capacity of 174. This capacity is
7 highly regulated by the Department of Children and
8 Families, which has complete responsibility for child
9 care all over the Nation, and they are the ones who
10 determine capacity with accurate measurements. It's
11 supposed to be 35 square feet per child, et cetera.

12 We feel we'll be one of the very few preschools in
13 the CBD area, because of this size, and size is
14 important. We are not a huge preschool. The optimum
15 size of preschools is about 100 to 200 children. We
16 have 174, but we need that scale in order to bring the
17 resources to the premises. You know, such as enrichment
18 programs of music, art, et cetera. Those teachers come
19 in only when there's enough business for them, so we'll
20 be able to provide that.

21 And, finally, I want to dispel any concerns
22 anybody may have about creating a long line of cars
23 during pick up and drop off. That will not be the case.
24 We're not really a school that starts with the ring of a
25 bell. We like to call ourselves-- there's an industry

1 insider term, preschool, but preschools do not start at
2 any definite time. Our drop off period is a three-hour
3 span. Our pick up period is the same three-hour span,
4 and this is born out by the fact that all Codes, and
5 Coral Gables subscribes to Miami-Dade's Code, specify
6 only five parking spaces for drop off and pick up for a
7 school of our size. So there's absolutely no chance
8 that we'll create a long line of traffic.

9 And if there are any questions, I would like to
10 address them.

11 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Go ahead, Robert.

12 MR. BEHAR: When you say that the drop off-- I
13 just want to get clarification, is this the drop
14 off/pick up internally?

15 MR. DAYAL: Yes.

16 MR. BEHAR: It will be inside the building. I
17 know it's a large development.

18 MR. DAYAL: We have a garage, and they would be
19 coming inside of the building, and we have designated
20 spaces.

21 MR. BEHAR: So it will not be done, you know, on
22 the streets.

23 MR. DAYAL: Absolutely not.

24 MR. BEHAR: It will be done internally.

25 MR. DAYAL: Yes.

1 MR. GRABIEL: I have a lot of experience. I have
2 six grandchildren, which I am the designated pick upper
3 most of the afternoons, and you don't drive up to the
4 door and the kid comes out. You get off the car, you
5 walk, pick them up from the classroom, you put them in
6 your car, and you go off, so I don't think we'll have
7 that problem.

8 MR. BEHAR: And the other question is, are you
9 required to have green space-- open green space?

10 MR. DAYAL: We are required to have a playground.
11 Now, in urban areas, DCF has a provision for an indoor
12 playground in lieu of outdoor, yes.

13 MR. GRABIEL: I think that anything that we can do
14 to support families, and especially in the CBD--

15 MR. BEHAR: I'm ready to make a motion for
16 approval.

17 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Hold on. Hold on. Hold on.
18 It's a public hearing item open to the public. Anybody
19 wishing to speak on this matter?

20 Hearing none, public item is closed.

21 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I move for recommendation.

22 MR. GRABIEL: I second.

23 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: You're moving for approval in
24 accordance with the Staff's recommendation?

25 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

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1 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Motion is second.
 2 Any further comment?
 3 Jill, would you call the roll?
 4 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?
 5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 6 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 7 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 8 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?
 9 MR. BELLIN: Yes.
 10 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?
 11 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.
 12 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?
 13 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.
 14 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?
 15 MR. PEREZ: Yes.
 16 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?
 17 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes. Thank you.
 18 All right. We had tabled Items 5 through 7, and
 19 we're back on those.
 20 Mr. Garcia-Serra.
 21 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: After-- sorry it took more than
 22 two minutes, and after considerable discussion, I think
 23 we're back right where we had left it, which the idea
 24 would be, I think ideally for us a continuance with
 25 instructions. Let's say, with your-- or the guidance

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1 that was provided, which as far as I have understood,
 2 sort of start at this starting point, find a way perhaps
 3 to increase the public benefits. Also, perhaps to
 4 decrease or redistribute the height, to perhaps
 5 addressed the height issue, but still have variation in
 6 height.
 7 MR. GRABIEL: Reduce density, reduce the FAR.
 8 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Okay. Well, this is at 2.5.
 9 MR. GRABIEL: Or less.
 10 MR. PEREZ: Why does height continue to be an
 11 issue, if the height is as right?
 12 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: He's saying reduce the FAR.
 13 MR. PEREZ: Now, I'm saying-- Mario said that
 14 they're going to play with the height. My thing is,
 15 their height is as of right. Why is height still an
 16 issue to us?
 17 MR. BELLIN: It's an issue with the neighbors, and
 18 that's the problem, but it is as of right. They can go
 19 to 150 feet.
 20 MS. MENENDEZ: But the density-- the FAR is at 2,
 21 and they're requesting additional. So, because I would
 22 think--
 23 MR. PEREZ: But to give them clear direction, us,
 24 as a Board, I think the consensus is that our main issue
 25 is FAR. Height is as of right. So is height an issue

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1 to us?
 2 MS. MENENDEZ: Yeah.
 3 MR. BEHAR: Well, they're seeking density and FAR,
 4 so if-- and to Marshall's point, the neighbors are
 5 concerned about some of the height. Without going to
 6 the eight-story box, if there's an opportunity to
 7 decrease the 120 in some way, shape or form, I think
 8 that's what--
 9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: If I can just chime in, I think--
 10 I mean, we all have maybe slightly different or maybe
 11 significantly different views. As a Board, the only way
 12 we can give them any kind of consensus, if we had a
 13 vote. I don't think there's a voting matter at this
 14 point. I think a lot of folks have weighed in, and I'll
 15 weigh in. I mean, my issue is that-- my inclination
 16 would be to approve a 50-unit and 2.0 FAR, and whatever
 17 you want more than that, the analysis that I would do as
 18 a Board Member would be what's in the best interest of
 19 the City. Have you made it palatable to the city; is it
 20 in the best interest of the City; are you offering
 21 enough? I mean, that's my view. You ask for feedback.
 22 That's my feedback.
 23 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Anybody else? Anybody
 24 want to make the motion?
 25 MR. PEREZ: I'll speak for myself. Give them

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1 direction. I have no issue with the height. If they
 2 want to go more toward two-and-a-half or 2.5 FAR or
 3 thereabouts, I'm okay, but my sticking point is the FAR
 4 issue, and if we get it to 2.5 or thereabouts, I'm okay
 5 with it. I have no issues whatsoever with the height.
 6 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Thank you.
 7 MR. COLLIER: So the request is for deferral, is
 8 that right?
 9 MS. MENENDEZ: To what date?
 10 MR. COLLIER: Are we taking it for a date certain?
 11 MR. LEEN: It's a continuance to a date certain.
 12 That's what we had agreed to, assuming the Board
 13 approves it.
 14 MR. COLLIER: What's the date certain?
 15 MR. WU: The next meeting is June 8.
 16 MS. MENENDEZ: But they have to be ready. Don't
 17 you have to submit that to the Staff.
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: What date is the Applicant
 19 looking for?
 20 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: June 8th.
 21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: June 8?
 22 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay. If it works, then.
 23 MR. LEEN: I checked with the Planning and Zoning
 24 Director, and he said he could do a recommendation by
 25 that time, if it's submitted quickly. But he did also

1 say, and he's here to speak on his own behalf, that we
 2 needed work from your side to really make this a
 3 priority and work hard, not that you haven't, but to
 4 meet that deadline.
 5 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: This actual plan was very well
 6 developed already.
 7 MR. COLLIER: Today is May 11th.
 8 MR. TRIAS: I think the City Attorney has
 9 explained it very well, but what I would like to say is
 10 that we are under very difficult conditions in terms of
 11 being able to review a project that has not been fully
 12 submitted. If the Applicant does an outstanding job
 13 with the architecture, I'm sure we can be hearing it in
 14 June with a recommendation, but I haven't seen any
 15 evidence of that. So until the Applicant does that, and
 16 we go to the Board of Architects, and there's a
 17 significant enhancement, I can't tell you what my
 18 recommendation is going to be.
 19 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: What's the date of our July
 20 meeting?
 21 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: I don't want the discussion to
 22 get to out of this area.
 23 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yeah. I don't want to go back
 24 and forth, no, sorry. What's the date of our July
 25 meeting?

1 MR. WU: July 13.
 2 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: July 13.
 3 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: But I would ask, you know,
 4 considering how long we've been involved in this
 5 project, if we're ready to go June 8th, that we can go
 6 June 8th?
 7 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: This has been a monthly--
 8 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct. And every month we've
 9 been making an effort, which I think has been
 10 demonstrated by the presentation this evening.
 11 MR. COLLIER: Just to clarify, we're doing it for
 12 June 8th, and that there's no further notice, and notice
 13 is being given tonight, is that correct, there's no--
 14 MR. LEEN: Well, that, Staff-- I would ask Mr. Wu,
 15 would we give notice again? We don't have to legally.
 16 MR. WU: We do not have to.
 17 MR. LEEN: Do we, as a matter of course?
 18 MR. WU: I think we can make a judgment and share
 19 with Mario, whether we need to do it. I think if we
 20 feel comfortable with this-- the last version, then--
 21 MR. COLLIER: I'd like to tell the folks that are
 22 here on the item whether there's going to be-- I mean,
 23 typically we announce no further notice. I mean, if you
 24 give notice, you give notice, but to those people in the
 25 audience that they should mark their calendar, because

1 there may be no further notice for the June 8th hearing.
 2 MR. LEEN: That's true. That's true.
 3 MS. GARCIA-SERRA: I'll point out it's been
 4 noticed many times. I'm in contact with the
 5 representatives of each of the groups. You know, the
 6 ones that are here know, and the ones that aren't here,
 7 I will advise and disclose to them, of course.
 8 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Someone want to move the
 9 continuance to an upcoming meeting?
 10 MS. MENENDEZ: I move to defer to June 8th, 2016.
 11 MR. GRABIEL: I'll second it.
 12 MR. LEEN: Please note, we prefer the word,
 13 "continue," just because sometimes a deferral--
 14 MS. MENENDEZ: I move to continue to June 8th,
 15 2016.
 16 MR. LEEN: Thank you, Ms. Menendez.
 17 MR. BEHAR: I'll accept that amendment.
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: The motion is second.
 19 Any further comment?
 20 MR. BELLIN: I'd like to be very clear as to what
 21 we're asking him to do. Are we asking them to lower the
 22 building? Raise the building?
 23 MS. MENENDEZ: You know, you're not going to get
 24 consensus tonight on it.
 25 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: They're just hearing from

1 everybody individually.
 2 MS. MENENDEZ: Yeah. Everybody gave their
 3 opinion. You're looking for a consensus, and we haven't
 4 seen the building.
 5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Jill, call the roll, please.
 6 MR. BELLIN: All right. What I would like to
 7 recommend--
 8 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?
 9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 10 MR. PEREZ: Wait, Wait. Marshall was saying
 11 something.
 12 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.
 13 MR. BELLIN: What I would like to recommend is,
 14 create a real park.
 15 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Say it again, what type of
 16 park?
 17 MR. BELLIN: Create a real park.
 18 MS. MENENDEZ: A real one.
 19 MR. BELLIN: A real green space that's usable by
 20 the community, and I think the dog park really doesn't
 21 serve any purpose.
 22 MR. BEHAR: I think that message was conveyed
 23 clearly by multiple Members.
 24 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Yeah.
 25 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. Jill, call the roll,

1 please.
 2 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?
 3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes. Still, yes.
 4 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 5 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 6 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?
 7 MR. BELLIN: Yes.
 8 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?
 9 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.
 10 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?
 11 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.
 12 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?
 13 MR. PEREZ: Yes.
 14 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?
 15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.
 16 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: We will see you in June. Thank
 17 you very much.
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Thank you.
 19 Item Number 10, Discussion item regarding the
 20 Community Benefits Program resolution passed by the City
 21 Commission.
 22 Is the City Staff making their presentation?
 23 MR. WU: Yes, sir.
 24 MS. MENENDEZ: Do you want to defer this one to
 25 our 17th meeting or is this--

1 MR. BEHAR: I think that's a great idea.
 2 MS. MENENDEZ: Or if you want to move it to June
 3 8th, because this has already gone through the
 4 Commission. It's not as though--
 5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Go ahead, make a motion.
 6 MS. MENENDEZ: I make a motion that Item Number 10
 7 be deferred to the June 8th meeting.
 8 MR. BEHAR: I second it.
 9 MS. MENENDEZ: Thank you, gentlemen.
 10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Motion and second. Anybody
 11 have a comment on that?
 12 MR. BELLIN: Yeah, I'd like to--
 13 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Jill, call the roll, please.
 14 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 15 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 16 MR. BELLIN: I'd like to know what Item 10 is.
 17 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?
 18 MR. BELLIN: Yes.
 19 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?
 20 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.
 21 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?
 22 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.
 23 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?
 24 MR. PEREZ: Yes.
 25 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?

1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 2 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?
 3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.
 4 Item Number 11, Discussion item regarding an
 5 increase or contribution related to the Art in Public
 6 Places Program.
 7 MR. WU: It's also related to Item Number 10.
 8 MS. MENENDEZ: I make a motion that Item Number 11
 9 be deferred to June 8, because this has already gone
 10 before the Commission. It's more of an informational
 11 piece for us.
 12 MR. WU: No. They are requesting your full
 13 feedback. This is not an FYI.
 14 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay. Is this a pressing issue for
 15 you?
 16 MR. WU: If you run out of time, you run out of
 17 time, so we'll be glad to hear it in the June meeting.
 18 MS. MENENDEZ: You're okay with that?
 19 MR. WU: Yes.
 20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I second the motion.
 21 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Moved and second it.
 22 Any further comment on it?
 23 Hearing none, Jill call the roll, please.
 24 THE SECRETARY: Marshall Bellin?
 25 MR. BELLIN: Yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: Julio Grabiell?
 2 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.
 3 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez?
 4 MS. MENENDEZ: Yes.
 5 THE SECRETARY: Alberto Perez?
 6 MR. PEREZ: Yes.
 7 THE SECRETARY: Frank Rodriguez?
 8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
 9 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 10 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 11 THE SECRETARY: Jeff Flanagan?
 12 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yes.
 13 Item Number 12, discussion item regarding Board
 14 Member Menendez attending a meeting of the
 15 Transportation Advisory Board as a Planning and Zoning
 16 Board Member.
 17 MS. MENENDEZ: This is because our Chairman does
 18 not want to go, so he delegated it to me.
 19 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Let me-- go ahead.
 20 MR. GRABIEL: I move to accept.
 21 MR. BEHAR: Second it.
 22 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: What's the-- wait. What
 23 happened? There's a discussion item. Are you going or
 24 have you gone?
 25 MS. MENENDEZ: No, I haven't gone.

1 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. So--
 2 MS. MENENDEZ: We're not going to discuss it.
 3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: All right. Let's discuss it
 4 briefly. I got an email from-- I forget the lady's
 5 name.
 6 MS. MENENDEZ: Jessica.
 7 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Jessica. Kind of a weird-- no
 8 offense, Jessica, if you're listening-- email basically
 9 saying, come to the Transportation Advisory Board,
 10 because they want to work with the Planning and Zoning
 11 Board and provide recommendation and have input into the
 12 applications that we hear. I hesitated for a couple of
 13 reasons. I thought if they wanted--
 14 Mr. Russo, thank you.
 15 If they-- with no idea what they wanted, what
 16 their thought process was, and I didn't think it was
 17 appropriate for me, as one Member of this Board, to go
 18 to them and have some discussion about whatever they
 19 were seeking or wanting to do, and I thought it would
 20 have been better, if they were having discussions within
 21 their Board, which they seemingly have had these
 22 discussions, that either that Board or somebody-- a
 23 representative of that Board could come to us to make a
 24 presentation as to what it is they had been discussing,
 25 so I held off, and I had suggested to City Staff that

1 somebody from the Board, I think it would be more
 2 appropriate to come here. Of course, I didn't want
 3 anybody to get any idea that I was committing this Board
 4 to anything with that Board. So that was my thought.
 5 That's why I backed off.
 6 MS. MENENDEZ: Right. And then my understanding
 7 is that they told that to the Board, but the Board is
 8 insisting on sending someone. I know what you know. I
 9 also followed up with Jessica some more to find out
 10 what's the issue, and I also talked to Craig to see if
 11 we can even go there. And they both said-- well, Craig
 12 said, "Yeah, that was fine."
 13 My understanding is that the Board is developing
 14 some type of standards that they would want us to adopt,
 15 which I'm not sure we can do that, because what I had
 16 explained to Jessica is, normally, that is something
 17 that comes from like Staff, no? And then we recommend
 18 it based on that. So, you know, I'm happy to go on
 19 behalf of the Board. I'm not going to commit to anyone.
 20 I can hear them out and report back to you all or we can
 21 stick to what you'd like to do, to have them come here.
 22 It's whatever you all want.
 23 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: If you want to go, that's fine
 24 with me.
 25 MS. MENENDEZ: No. It's not a wanting to go. I'm

1 trying to be responsive. It's not a matter of wanting
 2 to go. It's one more evening.
 3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: And my responsive answer to
 4 them was, if they're putting this together, come present
 5 it us so that our whole Board could hear it at the same
 6 time.
 7 MR. BELLIN: Id like to make a motion that we're
 8 requesting them to come to us, so that way we don't have
 9 to get secondhand information.
 10 MS. MENENDEZ: That's fine with me.
 11 MR. BELLIN: Let them come and present what they
 12 want.
 13 MR. BEHAR: But we had a motion and a second.
 14 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I withdraw the second.
 15 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: No, no. Hold on. This is
 16 only-- this was just a discussion item.
 17 MR. BEHAR: Yeah, but Frank made a motion.
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: For what?
 19 MR. BEHAR: To allow Maria to go.
 20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I withdraw my motion.
 21 MR. BELLIN: Okay. I make a motion to request for
 22 them to come before this Board to present their issue.
 23 MR. PEREZ: I second it.
 24 MS. MENENDEZ: Okay. You relay that to them,
 25 then.

1 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: I will.
 2 MS. MENENDEZ: Yeah. As our Chairman.
 3 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yeah, no problem.
 4 MS. MENENDEZ: It's your duty.
 5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay.
 6 MR. RODRIGUEZ: It's a non-voting matter?
 7 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yeah, do we need to vote on
 8 this--
 9 MS. MENENDEZ: No.
 10 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: --Craig Collier, as a
 11 discussion item?
 12 MR. COLLIER: Well, as a discussion item, you
 13 don't need to vote on it, but you can just-- the sense
 14 of the Board is they would like them to come here. I
 15 don't necessarily think you need to vote on it.
 16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: So we'll relay that message.
 17 MR. COLLIER: It's just a discussion item.
 18 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Yeah. We'll relay the message
 19 to the consensus-- the Transportation Advisory Board.
 20 Anybody have anything else? That was the last
 21 item on the agenda.
 22 I'm sorry?
 23 MR. HOLMES: There was an item that was on the
 24 agenda, which I was--
 25 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: You need to come up to the

1 microphone, please.
 2 MR. COLLIER: Could you state your name and
 3 address, for the record, please?
 4 MR. HOLMES: Thank you so much. Jackson Rip
 5 Holmes. I live at 4848 S.W. 135th Place, Miami, Florida
 6 33175. I own property at 256 Miracle Mile, Coral
 7 Gables. I appreciate you're allowing me latitude.
 8 There was a great item on the agenda. I think it's been
 9 deferred or removed to expand the notice requirement to
 10 include tenants in areas where that would be applicable
 11 or pertinent, and I support it. I hope it will be
 12 brought back, but I'm actually also glad that it's not
 13 going to be voted on tonight, because--
 14 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: No. Actually, Mr. Rip Holmes,
 15 that was voted on. We called it up. We held a public
 16 hearing on it, and it was approved.
 17 MR. HOLMES: Well, if you don't mind, I'd like to
 18 still--
 19 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: I'm sorry, the public hearing
 20 is over.
 21 MR. BEHAR: We voted on it.
 22 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: We approved that item. We
 23 recommended approval of that item already.
 24 MR. RODRIGUEZ: We approved it.
 25 MR. HOLMES: My hearing. I'm losing my hearing.

1 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: I'm sorry.
 2 MR. WU: Yes. He did open the public portion.
 3 MR. HOLMES: You won't allow me to make one
 4 comment?
 5 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: We've already approved it.
 6 We're not going to revisit it. There's nothing we're
 7 going to do at this point. Our recommendation to the
 8 Commission has been decided.
 9 MR. HOLMES: Did she call me as a speaker?
 10 MR. WU: We opened the public hearing for the
 11 public.
 12 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Sorry. Thank you.
 13 MR. WU: But you're welcome to submit your
 14 comments to Staff.
 15 MR. HOLMES: I may have been out of the room.
 16 CHAIRMAN FLANAGAN: Okay. All right. Hearing is
 17 adjourned. Thank you all. Have a great night.
 18 (Thereupon, the meeting was concluded at 8:45
 19 p.m.)
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 25

1 CERTIFICATE
 2
 3 STATE OF FLORIDA)
)
 4 COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE)
 5
 6 I, ESTELA L. VALLE, Shorthand Reporter, and a Notary
 7 Public for the State of Florida at Large, do hereby certify
 8 that I was authorized to, and did stenographically report the
 9 foregoing proceedings, and that the transcript is a true and
 10 complete record of my stenographic notes.
 11 DATED this 23rd of May, 2016.
 12
 13
 14 _____
 15 Estela L. Valle
 16 Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public
 17
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