

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES**  
**Economic Development Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday, July 2, 2008**  
**Development Department Office Conference Room**  
**95 Merrick Way, Suite 450, Coral Gables, Florida**

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

\*Present via telephone.

**STAFF:**

Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark, Development Director

**A = Absent**

**E = Excused Absence**

**P = Present**

**X = No Meeting**

**( )= Special Meetings**

**GUESTS:** Assistant City Managers Maria Jimenez and Dona Lubin; Mark Hebert, Raimondo Rudolfo, IT Department; Danny Benedict and Joe Martinez, Procurement; Director Kevin Kinney; Parking Department; Director Alberto Delgado, Public Works Department; Vivian Bonet, DYL Group; Otto Boudet-Murias, American Realty Capital; Carter McDowell, Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod LLP; Jose Halibert and Wright Stallings, Architects, Perkins & Will; Laura Russo, Esq.; Carol Ellis-Cutler, Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce

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

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Chair Richard DeWitt called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. A quorum was reached.

**I. Meeting Attendance:**

**Mr. Zomerfeld made a motion to excuse the absence of Dr. Smith. Mr. Casey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

**II. Approval of June 4, 2008 Board Minutes:**

**Mr. Casey made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 4, 2008 meeting as presented. Mr. Zomerfeld seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

**III. Procurement Code Review: Possible Land Swap with DYL Project at LeJeune and Greco:**

After introductions of guests, Ms. Rivenbark advised the Board that the procurement code was changing and improving. As part of the Board's responsibility under that code, they would review the DYL Group's development project, not to make a recommendation at this meeting, but to learn details of the project to facilitate a recommendation to the City Manager at a special meeting to be held later.

Ms. Russo and Mr. McDowell stated their positions as co-counsel for the DYL Group, and Mr. Halibert initiated presentation of the project, explaining that the primary proposal was to exchange an equal portion of property on the site for a City-owned property of approximately the same size, with benefits for the City. Specifically, the land swap would be an exchange of the City parking lot across from Havana Harry's Restaurant on LeJeune Road for a proposed park at the eastern end of DYL's property.

Ms. Russo, Mr. McDowell and Mr. Halibert comprehensively reviewed project plans, using displays, and described the background of the project, information about the surrounding areas and uses. They assured the Board that the land swap would trade square foot for square foot and dollar for dollar, with no loss of public

parking, plus create a public park to be owned by the City and maintained by the developer. Discussion included the following topics:

- An alley vacation as a component of the project, which would result in relocation to the inside of the project of all utilities and public services access;
- Retail arcade all around the project, including a few restaurants facing the park, parking entrances, spaces (over 1200 total, part of which will be short-term/turnover customer parking) and public accessibility;
- Appraisals of both properties were conducted by the City and the developer, and the City's appraiser viewed the exchange as a value-for-value swap except for the added value of being part of an assemblage;
- An economic impact study was conducted, copies of which will be provided to the Board by the development team, to include the assumed tax revenue to the City. In addition, the development team will submit a report outlining their view of economic impacts;
- The project is anticipated to add approximately 300,000 square feet of commercial and retail space to the City's tax revenue base.

As part of the City's process, this project will be presented to the Parking Advisory, Development Review Committee, Budget Audit and Planning and Zoning boards, and will ultimately be presented to the City Commission. Regarding Mr. Casey's inquiry about possible accommodations for workforce housing, it was explained that the 41 included residential units were high-end condominiums. Regarding landscaping and other neighborhood amenities, the developer will improve Greco and Granello Avenues, adding sidewalks, landscaping and improving the streetscapes.

#### **IV. Update on Cell Phone Coverage in the City:**

As a follow up to previous discussions with the Board, Ms. Lubin reported that a meeting was scheduled later today with a representative of the Biltmore Hotel regarding the dead zone gap in cell phone coverage in several areas of the property. Various tower designs will be presented to the Biltmore for discussion at the meeting.

After distributing a draft developed by the City's IT Department of a Scope of Work (SOW) for City-wide cellular towers, Mr. Hebert said the SOW was based on research of other cities attempting comparable projects. He pointed out that what needed to specifically be developed was the identification of allocated space where cell phone companies could deploy their service, a vetting process to determine usefulness and appropriateness. This would require a legal agreement between the City and the vendors, real estate for the towers and specifics about what would be viable. Mr. Hebert said the draft SOW had not yet been reviewed by the City Attorney.

Ms. Rivenbark commented that any City properties could be included. Recommendations included adding stealthing and potential revenues to the City as part of the bidding documents, as well as revenue options, aesthetics and improved service that would respond to City issues. Ms. Ellis-Cutler discussed public concerns that would need to be addressed. Regulatory and public processes that would need to occur as the project progressed were discussed. Ms. Rivenbark cautioned that the evaluation criteria needed to include aesthetics to allay public concerns. Mr. Benedit agreed to begin developing a timeline for moving forward.

#### **V. Update – Downtown Parking:**

Mr. Kinney first remarked that, regarding the DYL development project, a key finding of a study conducted by the Public Works Department a few years ago indicated the City should stop giving away its parking assets. He said that the Parking Advisory Board would discuss that issue with the DYL Group to develop an arrangement the City could support, stating the importance of ensuring that spaces would be available for other uses to invest back into the public system. There followed a discussion about various elements of the project, issues pertaining to right-of-way and public easement on LeJeune Road.

Regarding downtown parking, Mr. Kinney said that new on-street technology was being considered, and discussed a meeting the day before that included Ms. Lubin with manufacturers of parking machines with multiple forms of payment. The manufacturers indicated they would work cooperatively with the City if a decision was made to move forward. Board members were vocal about their mixed opinions of the machines.

Regarding the CashKey, Mr. Kinney said the technology was outdated and would not be supported long term. Smart Cards are compatible with newer technology, but many people use a credit or debit card for parking payments.

A secondary issue, Mr. Kinney said, was the Zoning Code rewrite regarding a change of standards in parking stall sizes as part of an examination of creating parking efficiencies. He talked about a layout for Biltmore Way created with nine-foot spaces that showed a gain of ten new spaces on the street. If this layout makes sense to the Public Works Department and others, the new layout will be implemented. Several other areas are also being examined.

Regarding garage one, Mr. Kinney discussed a proposal to redevelop the site which would produce a net gain of 84 public spaces (currently 278 spaces, which would increase to 362). He said the Parking Advisory Board reviewed the concepts and determined if the site were developed as a garage with ground floor retail, it would result in over 800 parking spaces, a net gain of approximately 550 parking spaces. However, an additional 550 spaces are not needed in that location. The Parking Advisory Board is amenable to the concept of developing that site because the garage needs to be demolished, and is also amenable to a private/public partnership development, but requires a net gain for the City of 300 parking spaces. Any facility that exists in that location needs to be owned and operated by the public because it is a key location. Garages four and one are currently filled to capacity most of the time.

There followed a discussion about the status of changing the code to allow public parking in private garages after business hours. Ms. Lubin will request an update from the Planning Department on the issue. Mr. Kinney said he received a proposal to open private garages for valet parking to relieve public parking pressures in the evening, but said he would need assurance that it would meet the City's objectives. During discussion of related issues, Ms. Diaz Jourdain suggested examining the projections of the density to determine square footage that would be allowed by the Zoning Code that could include a 500-car garage in future planning to address future need. She also said the merchants might have issues with parking as well as development on Miracle Mile above existing storefronts.

Ms. Lubin reiterated that she would follow up with the Planning Department regarding use of private garages.

## VI.

### **Update on the Miracle Mile Plan:**

Mr. Delgado stated that since the Miracle Mile streetscape project was not progressing, a Streetscape Advisory Committee was formed by the Business Improvement District (BID). This committee, comprised of architects, planners, merchants, business owners and parking/transportation experts, met and developed a preliminary plan, distributed by Mr. Delgado to the Board. The committee will create consensus about moving forward, and Mr. Delgado emphasized the importance of moving quickly, stating that the condition of Miracle Mile is worsening all the time.

The objectives of the committee were stated as follows:

- To articulate the necessity of a new streetscape;
- To recommend proper parking/sidewalk scenario and its design, including landscaping, retail kiosks, trolley stops, furniture and bike racks;
- To review financing ideas to be researched by the BID and City staff, together with possible repayment options;
- To review streetscape of the existing 100 block of Giralda Avenue (restaurant row) to determine its functionality and make design recommendations, and to review the feasibility of redevelopment of Garage No. 1 as part of a master redevelopment project.
- To recommend timing and implementation tactics, including the possibility of building one block now, given the presence of funding of about \$1.5 million to \$2 million.

Mr. Delgado said the City is waiting for recommendations from the committee, after which they will proceed with design of one block. Mr. DeWitt expressed concern about having only one committee determine

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recommendations for such a prominent destination. Ms. Diaz Jourdain stated that the members of the committee were respected, responsible professionals who are more focused on aesthetics and the usability of this particular project. She suggested allowing the committee to undergo the process. Mr. Delgado said they are also concerned about getting public opinion, and Ms. Diaz Jourdain recommended that the committee build a strategy to get input from public workshops or idea exchanges from the users. Mr. Delgado relayed problems with reaching consensus among the merchants and property owners in the past, and expressed confidence that this process could be a good concept for the future. Ms. Ellis-Cutler said the Chamber of Commerce would like to be involved in any stage of the project, and could even host a public forum.

Regarding funding, property owners have expressed an unwillingness to participate in funding improvements. There is money allocated for Miracle Mile in the General Obligation Bond, but additional funding is necessary. Mr. Zomerfeld stated that the committee's work would, in any event, be a good exercise, would not impose any cost to the City, and would produce a consensus of the merchants. However, without agreement to partner and share in the costs associated with Miracle Mile improvements, the project would be challenged. Mr. DeWitt recommended that the plan developed by the committee be vetted against a mini-charrette or Chamber forums. Citing plans that had been created in the past and had not moved forward, he said a more creative way of financing the project should be developed. Ms. Diaz Jourdain suggested a cost/benefit analysis be given to the merchants, after which various ways to creatively address funding were discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

**Next Board Meeting: September 3, 2008, 8:00 a.m. in the Development Office**

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Swanson Rivenbark  
Development Director  
Secretary to the Economic Development Board